

INFERNAL WAR MACHINES: A SPOTTER'S GUIDE

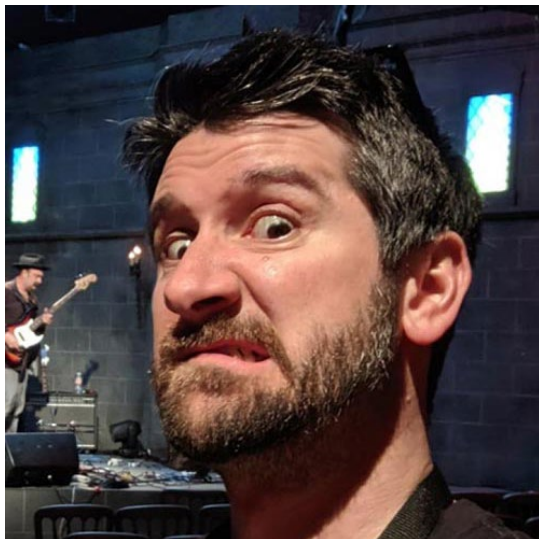
DRAGON+

D&D LIVE 2019: THE DESCENT

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

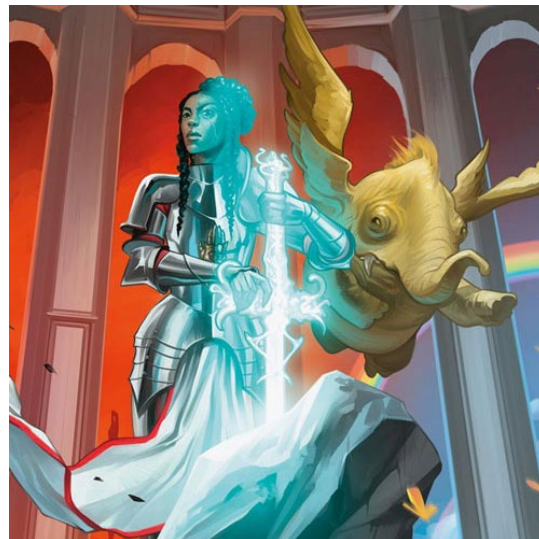
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ISSUE 26



Welcome to Dragon+ Issue 26

We hope you like smithereens. Because event organizer extraordinaire Greg Tito drew so much power from D&D Live 2019 that his column smashes the fourth wall into them!



Imagining the Ampersand: Fiona Staples

Rogue-loving artist Fiona Staples steals our hearts with a double-rainbow as she discusses the heaven and hell images she's crafted for Baldur's Gate: Descent Into Avernus.

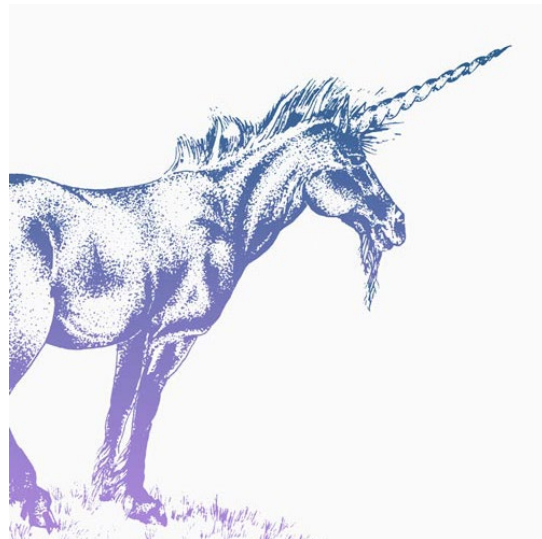


In the Works

Our roundup of (nearly) every item in production right now is stacked following D&D Live 2019 and news of long-awaited video game sequel Baldur's Gate III.

D&D LIVE 2019: THE DESCENT

Exclusive signings, masses of livestreams, a D&D Epic worthy of Furiosa herself and unicorn on the menu. Welcome to D&D Summer Camp 2019.



D&D Classics

A look back at past forays into the Nine Hells!

Monsters and Fables

Executive Producer Jennifer Kretchmer and Dungeon Master T.J. Storm open the book on their fairy tale-inspired stream Monsters & Fables.



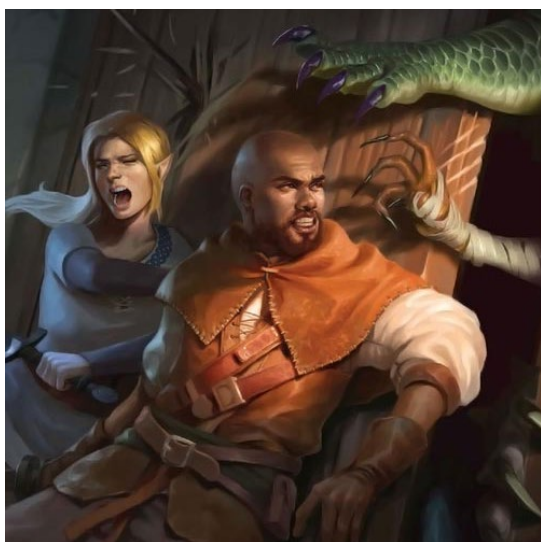
The Best of the Dungeon Masters Guild

D&D Live 2019: The Descent took us straight to Hell! His mind dancing with infernal delights, Shawn Merwin braves the brimstone-tainted pages of the DMs Guild to deliver up a host of fiendish and demonic products.



Unearthed Arcana: The Artificer Returns

In a previous Unearthed Arcana we took a second look at the artificer character class, fleshing out this master of magical invention. Now we present an updated revision of this new class, adding further options.



The Experience of



Behind the Screen:

Youth

Jim Zub offers a sneak peek inside the D&D Young Adventurer's Guides, before Chris Perkins lifts the lid on the D&D Essentials Kit

Heroes of Hawethorne

Friendly local gaming store owner Rob Gruber runs a popular Dungeons & Dragons game for younger players. When their moms wanted to know what all the fuss was about, Ladies of Hawethorne was born.



Extra Life

Bob Nelson and Braydon Fiveash from the Adventuring Guild Podcasting Network share their love of homebrew content as Dragon+ offers this platform to thank them for their generous Extra Life charitable donation.

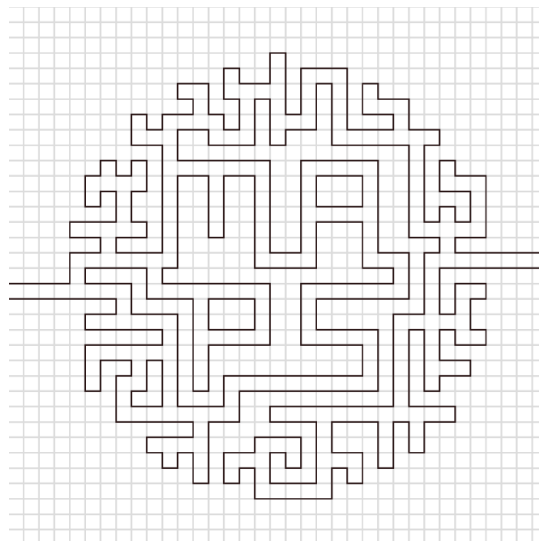
Streaming Highlights

This issue's highlights reel includes movie-quality FX on a small scale, the voyage of the MHS Second Chance, and a few moments from D&D Live 2019 you may have missed!



Fiction: The Henchman

A plunder gone awry, a ticking clock on the high seas, and a world weary carpenter who's stuck in the middle. This month's story, inspired by Ghosts of Saltmarsh, tells the tale of a pirate crew having bitten off much more than they can chew.



Maps of the Month: Ghosts of Saltmarsh Maps and Art



Next Issue: Dragon 27



A big thank you to the extended D&D family for their help with

the creation of this issue.

Guest Editor Chris Boyce puts his personal stamp on the issue when Dragon+ returns in August, as we venture even further into Hell.

DRAGON+ 26

Welcome to Dragon+ Issue 26

We hope you like smithereens. Because event organizer extraordinaire Greg Tito drew so much power from D&D Live 2019 that his column smashes the fourth wall into them!

Greg Tito

i need to write a thing about D&D Live for Dragon+.



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I am on a plane flying back to Seattle from a whirlwind #e32019 trip. Awake by Tycho is playing in my ears—relaxing me while also discouraging conversation. I jam my head to the beat, ever so slightly so I don't annoy the men to either side of me in coach. Seat 22B.

I have to write a thing about D&D Live for Dragon+. And it is hard to get started. The event felt like a beautifully flawed trip to Hell. Best of intentions. Big ambitions. Mostly fulfilled plans. What is there to say?

Perhaps because I had double-barrel pink eye on the Friday of D&D Live and I lost my voice talking to hundreds of people, that whole weekend in May feels like a strange trip on another plane of

existence. There were certainly moments drinking tea from a huge D&D mug and drinking in the Descent with my blood-shot eyes that I thought all this before me just couldn't be real. Running on Throat Coat, buttered croissants, adrenaline and caffeine while stumbling through scores of devils, imps, storytellers, bards and broken souls on the way to watch people roll a d20 and make each other laugh in a red-drenched studio...

Well, it can appear like a fever dream.

I have to write about D&D Live but it's all a blur. Hollywood feels like that anyway, but I'm not talking about the boulevard stars or the caricatures. Flashes of memory will stick with me a long time. Driving to the studio with Pelham in the rain. Paranoid Android. A bloody thumbprint on a map of Avernus. An infernal machine with the horns of a creature. Laughter, cheers, and boos. A flash of lightning and the studio in darkness. A friend breathing deeply in the corner—me unable to hug them. Sprinting through the parking lot around to the production truck. Twice. The red neon Death Saves sign. The smile of a savior offering a gin & tonic. A mindflayer. A vrock. A singing enchantress. Actual rock—in concert form.

How amazing was it to yell out while wielding the Magic Sword! To feel the joy of voices lifted in song! The glory of being among the dreamers, the experiencers, the weavers. For every bit of stress I felt putting on this show, there was a matching and overwhelming joy found from the creative fonts around me.

My friends in the D&D community—it is you we celebrate each year at D&D Live. You inspire me to live my best life and to be a force for good. To be in your presence was truly soul-replenishing when my body and mind needed it most.



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The truth is I didn't feel very good about myself a few months ago. I didn't know what I was doing. I was a fraud. Nobody was going to have fun at this stupid thing. Self-doubt and career anxiety don't go well together. Luckily there were people who believed in what we were building in a little studio in Hollywood and gave me the push to keep aiming to bring so many facets of the D&D community together there for one weekend.

I'm eternally grateful for everyone on the D&D team and beyond for rocking out this event with me. These type of things are only successful when a bunch of super-talented people commit to making it work and this year truly felt like a team coalescing around bringing Avernus to life. An event like this doesn't have a credits page but I tried to thank everyone I could in a twitter thread. If you want to see the sheer number of people it takes to pull something like this off, [take a look](#).



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I have to write a thing about D&D Live for Dragon+ and although my dogs are barking from a whole week of production followed by dozens of E3 meetings taken from the back of a #Lime scooter, I'm floating from the love and respect of D&D expressed by so many people in the game industry. It seemed that everyone I ran into in the JW Marriott Lobby or on the show floor had some story to tell about how they were just getting into the game or starting up a lunchtime D&D campaign at their

studio. We gave away a lot of stickers and dice. There is so much we can do.

The announcement breaks through the Billy Joel playing in my ears. The plane is making The Descent.

I guess I wrote a thing about what it feels like on the other side of D&D Live. I've said these annual celebrations feel like the end of a calendar year for me. Now it's time to slow down, enjoy the Seattle

summer, hug my kids, nap, eat hot dogs, ride a bike and recharge.

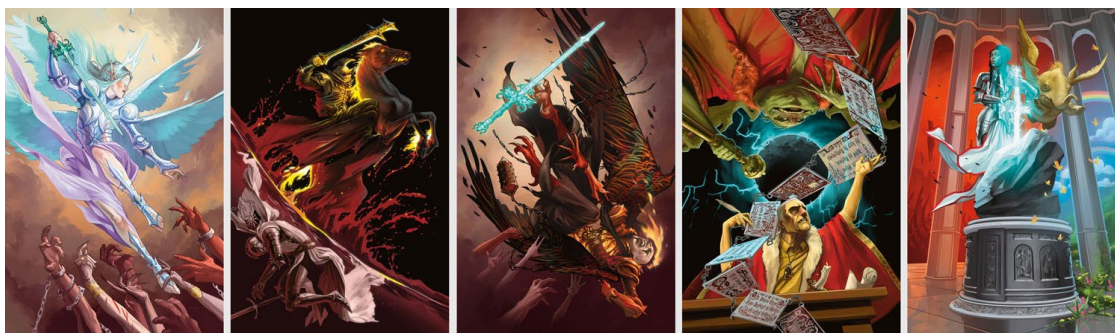
And, of course, start planning for #DNDLive2020 #e32020 and all the hashtags in between.

See you in hell!

Greg Tito



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Imagining the Ampersand: Fiona Staples

Rogue-loving artist Fiona Staples steals our hearts with a double-rainbow as she discusses the heaven and hell images she's crafted for Baldur's Gate: Descent Into Avernus.

Matt Chapman

Artist Fiona Staples makes up one half of the award-winning duo creating the hit comic *Saga*, alongside writer Brian K. Vaughan. She first started playing D&D “as a grown-up” a few years ago but has yet to encounter versions of the main characters from her epic space opera/fantasy series in that world. “I don’t know if fans have recreated the *Saga* characters in D&D but that would be awesome!” she tells *Dragon+*. “If they’re out there, I hope their DM is more merciful than Brian.”

Saga’s story follows Alana and Marko, two lovers from long-warring extraterrestrial races, fleeing authorities from both sides of a galactic war as they struggle to care for their newborn daughter, Hazel, who occasionally narrates the series. And Staples admits it would be handy if players could

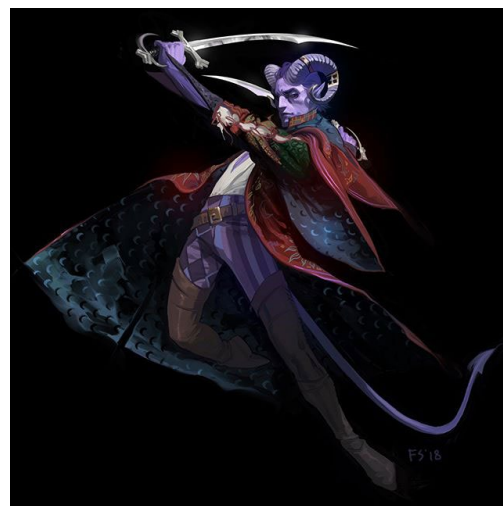


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emulate some of Marko's wreathe powers in D&D, using components such as newly aired secrets to top up their magic after running out of spell slots.

Not that she needs that ability for most of her characters. Although she likes to switch it up in D&D games, she admits she has an affinity for rogues. "I think I'm a pretty straightforward person in reality but sneaking around and stealing things in games is just incredibly appealing. I'm addicted to the feeling of getting away with something. Combat is okay, but nothing compares to the satisfaction of something like **ghosting** in *Dishonored*."

Her latest campaign—DMed by fellow comic-book creator Kurtis Wiebe, writer of *Rat Queens*—sees her party of interdimensional castaways exploring a sorcerer's castle to discover why he magicked them onto his plane. "That allows us to play as pretty much any kind of character we could think of and is the reason my teenage dwarf barbarian is adventuring alongside a fan salesman from 1920's Cincinnati."



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While she hasn't run a game yet herself, she's looking forward to the day she takes control as a Dungeon Master: "I'm trying to get my organizational and improv skills up to snuff!"



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Is this your first ever project for Dungeons & Dragons?

This is the first time I've worked with D&D and I was very excited to get a call—or tweet—from them. I've admired the rich and eye-catching artwork in their books for a long time.

Was there a specific piece of art that caught the team's eye to consider you for this commission? The team saw a piece of fanart I did of *Critical Role*'s Mollymauk. I don't usually get to create a ton of work in traditional fantasy so my interest in the genre tends to come out in sketches and fanart that I do on my own time. It's fun and an effective way to broadcast

your tastes!

How would you describe your art style?

Kind of comic-booky? A blend between digital painting and line drawing.

Where do you start with a new piece of art?

I start with a sketch, then move on to a tighter line drawing. I rough in the colors and values, usually keeping all the major elements and background on separate layers. Then I get to work rendering and cleaning everything up. The way I usually work, it's more like coloring a drawing than doing a painting—I'm guided by the linework. I use Photoshop and Clip Studio.

How close are the final images to



B

the initial commission?

They turned out pretty close to the initial roughs I sent in but there

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was some productive back and forth with the D&D team! They obviously know the setting inside and out, and had lots of insights when it came to the style of Yael's citadel or Zariel's demonic form. Some of the official character designs were being finalized as I was working on the posters, so their look evolved from the brief I was given a few months ago. It's been pretty cool to watch this campaign take shape.

There's a real sense of story to the images you've created. What's the key to incorporating that?

I treated them similarly to how I would approach a comic-book cover. In both cases there's a strong, intricate narrative behind them that should be suggested but not totally spoiled by the image. But the story informs the way I pose the characters, their general attitude, and the environment and items around them. These posters were especially fun because they each have a "before and after" theme, so the character's transformation alone implies a dramatic background story!



Cover 01

How easy was it to achieve that dual effect, with images having a heaven/hell feel depending on how you look at them?
It was interesting to figure out because each character's

circumstances were different. As I see it, Zariel's tragic fall was brought about by her righteous anger and bloodlust; Thavius Kreeg sold his soul for power; Haruman offered himself up to remain a zealous follower of Zariel; and Yael wasn't exactly corrupted, but transformed into a spirit. So hopefully each unique situation is reflected in their portrait.

We see a double rainbow in one of the images. Is that a nod to the internet meme?

It's so intense!

Where do you keep the many, many Eisner and Harvey awards you've won for *Saga*?

In a box since my last move, unfortunately. A well-padded box.

You can see more of Fiona Staples' work on [her official website](#) and connect with her on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

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DUNGEONS & DRAGONS GAME NIGHT



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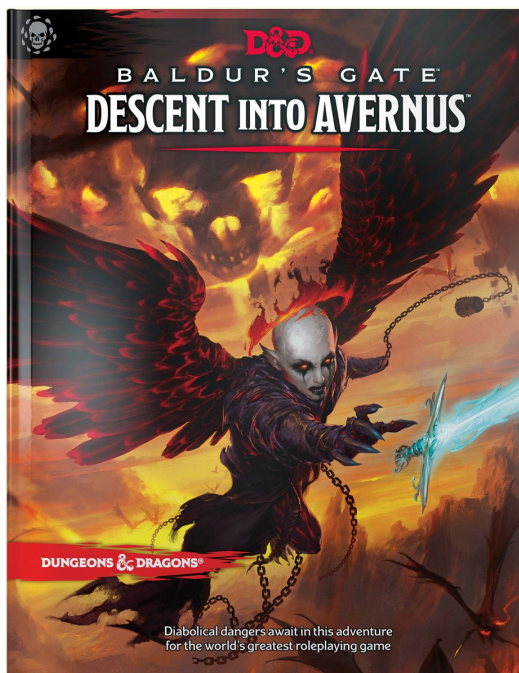
PREVIEWS

IN THE WORKS



Baldur's Gate: Descent Into Avernus

If you somehow missed the news from *D&D Live 2019: The Descent* (seriously, have you been living under a vrock!?), the next major Dungeons & Dragons storyline takes a Hellish turn. *Baldur's Gate: Descent Into Avernus* revealed some of its secrets during the three-day event (see our behind-the-scenes coverage on the following page), although there are plenty of big surprises still in store for players.



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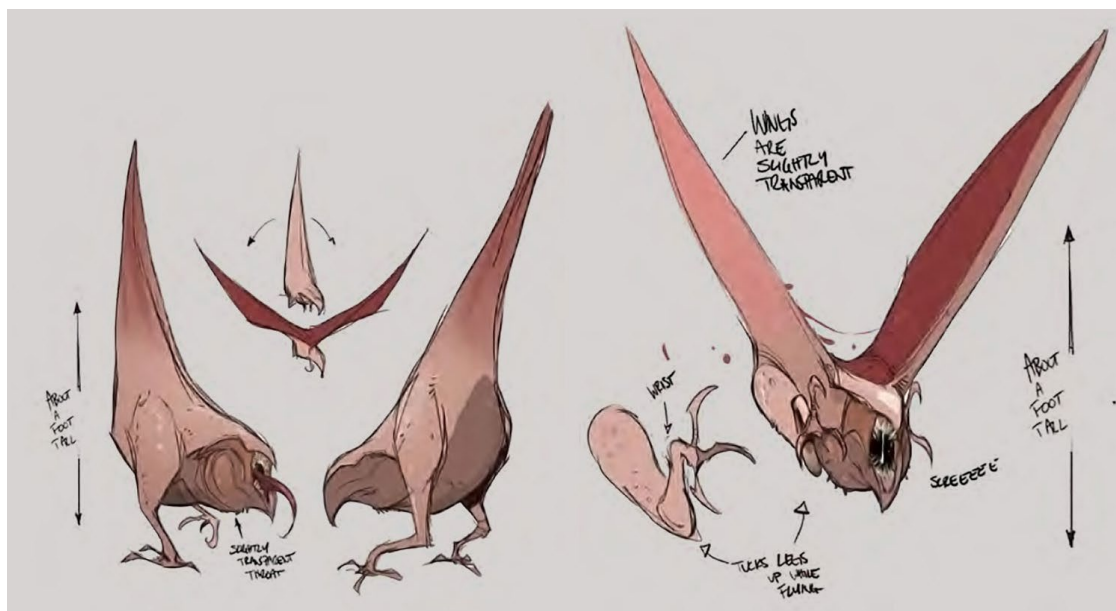
Baldur's Gate has been referred to as a city of ambition and corruption... and even less kindly as a nest of rats and vipers clinging to the rocky slopes overlooking the Chionthar River.

Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus, an adventure for characters level 1-13, starts off in this iconic location—and while a first-level character may have only just begun their adventuring career, prepare for them to be embroiled in a plot that will take them from the murderous city to the front lines of the Blood War!

“At this point in D&D’s history we’ve reached a time where we have great confidence in the power of the game and not a lot of fear about

doing a story in Hell,” says Chris Perkins, Principal Story Designer for Dungeons & Dragons. “I’m a big proponent of remembering where D&D came from but looking at it through a modern lens and with modern sensibilities. Nothing ever dies.”

From the city of Baldur’s Gate, events move to Avernus—the first layer of the Nine Hells—where the stakes are high and most adventurers will likely find themselves out of their depth. Hopefully, the use of epic—and distinctively customizable—infernal war machines (more on those below!) can help them navigate the dangers of Avernus. However, there remain great risks—such as devils’ deals, designed to lure the adventurers with the ultimate temptations of power and treasure! And chickens!



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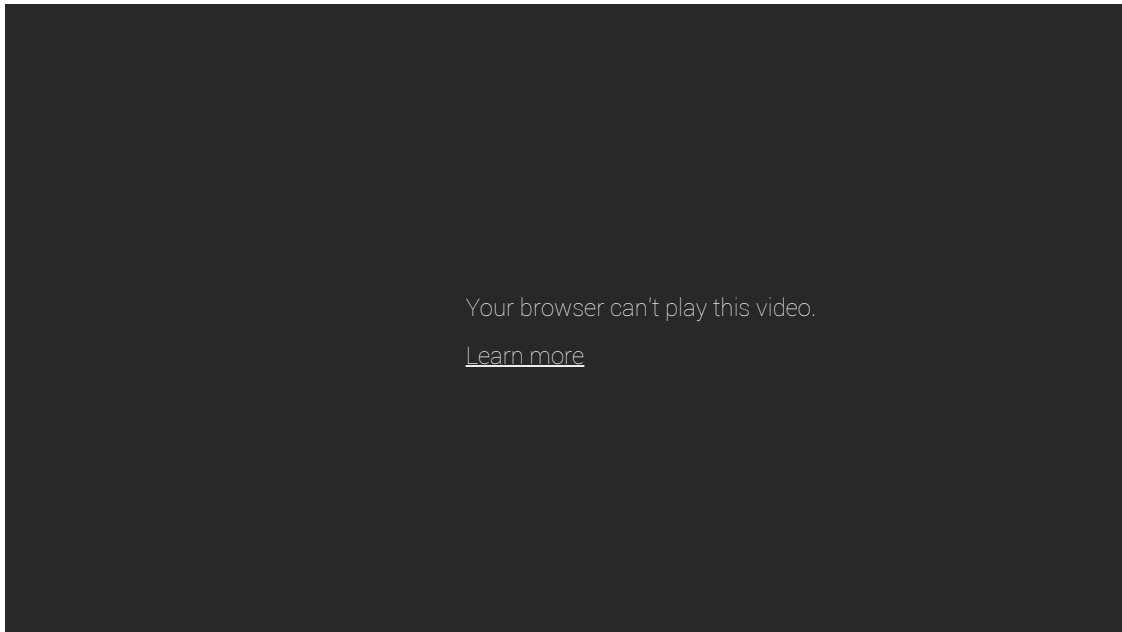
“The abyssal chicken may be the greatest invention but I can’t take credit for that,” explains Jim Zub. “Artist Max Dunbar was putting together concept art for the center of Avernus and needed something for scale. He suggested using wildlife and they said, ‘It’s Hell, there’s no wildlife!’ So Max suggested birds or flocks of something and eventually this idea of the abyssal chicken came up. They’re disgusting. And wonderful.”

“Abyssal chicken can be familiars,” adds Chris Perkins, Principal Story Designer for Dungeons & Dragons, although Kate Welch warns: “They’ll kick your ass.”

Do you have what it takes to survive an infernal deathtrap and return

safely home from Avernus, or will you be doomed to the Nine Hells by the 'peck' of an abyssal bird?

"I want people to know that it doesn't matter what they believe, what they like or what their style of play is, there is a game table out there for them," Perkins says. "And there's a campaign where they can charge like Mad Max across the blasted wastelands of Avernus in a spike-addled Hell machine, cranking up the guitar in their own house while running these combats. That's not a bad way to spend your afternoon."



Baldur's Gate: Descent Into Avernus releases September 17, 2019 with an MSRP of \$49.95. An alternative art cover with a distinctive design and soft-touch finish will also be available exclusively in game stores.



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Descent Into Avernus Dice and Miscellany

To accompany *Tomb of Annihilation*, Wizards of the Coast released the *Tomb of Annihilation Dice Set* in a custom tin. Then at 2018's *Stream of Many Eyes*, it announced the *Dragon Heist Dice Set*, which also included a handy hit point tracker. Now at this year's D&D Live 2019, it has upped the offering with *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus Dice and Miscellany*!



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Here's everything you'll find included:

- Eleven dice (two d20s, one d12, two d10s, one d8, four d6s, one d4).

A durable, lined dice tray, which also works as part of a two-piece dice box.

- Twenty double-sided cards with encounter tables and story content for the devils and demons of the Blood War, featuring exclusive art from Max Dunbar.
- Exclusive content card for *Strange Encounters* and *Trinkets One Finds in Avernus*.
- Foldout map of Avernus for player use.
- Sizing chart for Blood War demons and devils.

“We listen to the fans,” says Nathan Stewart, Senior Director of Dungeons & Dragons, pointing out that the dice set now includes two d20s (for rolling with advantage and disadvantage) and four d6s (for rolling character stats). “They’re calling the dice color ‘brimstone’, which seems appropriate,” adds Perkins.

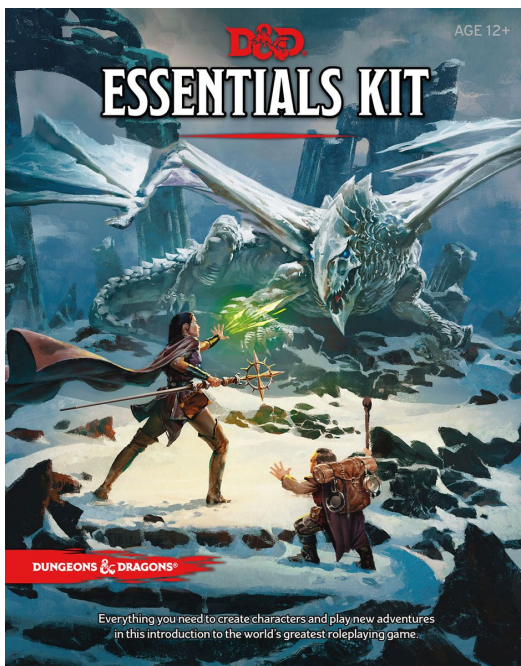
Baldur’s Gate: Descent into Avernus *Dice and Miscellany* releases September 17, 2019 with an MSRP of \$24.95.

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D&D Essentials Kit



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With the *D&D Starter Set* now firmly established, audiences interested in jumping into a fantasy story have been keen to get their hands on another introductory product. Also announced at D&D Live 2019 (and fleshed out in greater detail by Chris Perkins this issue), the *D&D Essentials Kit* boxed set contains everything you need to run a D&D game with one Dungeon Master and one to five adventurers:

- Sixty-four-page rulebook that teaches you how to create characters of levels 1–6 and play the game. Also includes the introduction of sidekick rules.
- *Dragon of Icespire Peak*, a sixty-four-page introductory adventure written by Chris Perkins.
- Double-sided poster map for use with *Dragon of Icespire Peak*.
- Four-panel, folding Dungeon Master's screen.
- Six blank character sheets.
- Eleven polyhedral dice.
- Eighty-one cards describing magic items, sidekicks, and other D&D game elements, plus a folding box to hold all the cards.
- Digital codes to continue your Dungeons & Dragons journey on

D&D Beyond:

Unique discount code for 50% off the digital version of the *Player's Handbook*.

Unique Product Key to unlock a digital version of the *Dragon of Icespire Peak* adventure.

Access to supplementary content of the character races, classes, monsters, magic items, and more from the *Essentials Kit's* rulebook and additional adventure content, to continue the story into higher levels of play.

Watch on [D&D Live here](#).

The *D&D Essentials Kit* releases June 24 at Target with an MSRP of \$24.99, followed in all other stores on September 24, 2019.

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Wizkids' Infernal War Machine



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The transport of choice for the discerning visitor to Avernus is the Infernal War Machine. These are the tanks of the Blood War, and devils use them to move about the Hellscape and fight demons. And now you can command your own, with WizKids' Infernal War Machine Premium Set.

“We are releasing an eleven-inch Infernal War Machine, which is like a battle tank, and you can fit a mini in the pilot seat and six minis in the passenger compartment. That’s how you get around the Nine Hells and kick some demon ass,” says Jason Azevedo from Realmsmith.tv. “Alongside that premium figure, we’re doing a typical forty-five-figure set themed to the campaign setting. That will obviously feature a lot more demons, including some that haven’t been released before in the pre-painted line. And we’ll also have the key NPCs and the baddies for this storyline.”



WizKids is also working on an exciting collaboration with premium D&D supplier Beadle & Grimm's. Their *Platinum Edition* of *Baldur's Gate: Descent Into Avernus* will include a very special version of that *Infernal War Machine*.

"We're so excited to announce that we'll be releasing our own Beadle & Grimm's edition of that mini, which will be exclusive to our box. Ours has a death wheel on the front of it!" says Matthew Lillard. "Once that gets out, we think the box will sell out fast."

Lillard also showed off Beadle & Grimm character figures at the event. Does that mean the sales duo will soon appear in an emporium in game? "We want to put an emporium shop in *every* adventure. It's the Pandemonium Warehouse, so why can't it be a magical shop?" he asks.

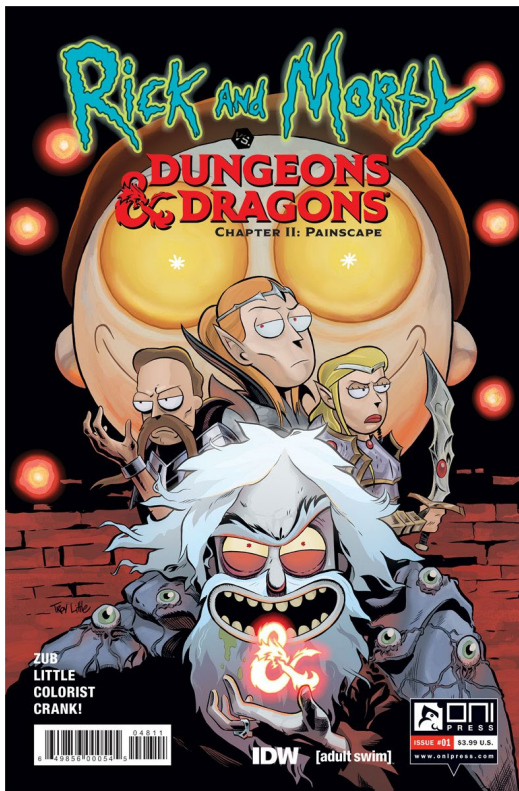
WizKids' Infernal War Machine releases August 2019 with an MSRP of \$69.99. Beadle & Grimm's *Platinum Edition* of *Baldur's Gate: Descent Into Avernus* releases September 2019 with an MSRP of \$499.

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Rick and Morty



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When Jim Zub's on the guest list for D&D Live, it's a good sign that further *Rick and Morty* goodness is on the horizon. And it is...

First up, when the world's greatest roleplaying game meets television's most dysfunctional family, what could possibly go wrong? The *D&D vs. Rick and Morty Tabletop Roleplaying Game Adventure* (quite the title, but we had to pack it all in there!) is a box set that includes everything a Dungeon Master needs to run a *rickrolling* adventure for up to five players, levels 1-3.

"Rick is not an actual entity...but I have had to fight Rick," reveals Kate Welch, who headed up the project and wrote the adventure.

Also announced! Look for even more *Rick and Morty vs. Dungeons & Dragons*, which reteams writer Jim Zub with Eisner-nominated cartoonist Troy Little (*Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*, *The Powerpuff Girls*). Once upon a game, Rick, Morty, and the Smith family went on magical D&D adventures... now, magical D&D adventures are coming to Earth, and with the next chapter of the

comic series, no one will survive the Painscape!

“*Rick & Morty vs. Dungeons & Dragons Chapter II: Painscape* is essentially inverting the paradigm. The Smith family went to the world of Dungeons & Dragons, and now Dungeons & Dragons is coming to our world to wreck it,” writer Jim Zub reveals. “What you’ll discover in the first issue is that Rick has obviously been playing since first edition and he has characters he’s not very proud of, characters he rolled poorly for or who maybe did poorly in adventures and he discarded them. In all the infinite dimensions somewhere they exist and they are angry and they wish to get their vengeance.

“Just like last time, we get to dig into some dorkishly glorious D&D canon. I can’t reveal all of it but my first edition collection is getting a workout. But just like the first series you don’t have to have read *The Secret of Bonehill* to know that’s a funny concept and that we’re playing off an old adventure module. It’s the same here—you may not know what some of these locations are unless you’re a big D&D **grogard** and if you do you’ll enjoy it, but if you don’t you’ll know it’s something intrinsic to the canon that we’re messing with. And it’s a good ride. I write books for Marvel and it’s the exact same process. A new reader has to be able to pick this up and get everything they need from it. They can read an issue of *Champions* or *Avengers: No Road Home* and they don’t have to have read fifty or sixty years of Marvel comics to appreciate what these characters are doing. But if they have they will also notice that we did our homework.”



(Select to view)

Look for the first issue of *Rick and Morty vs. Dungeons & Dragons Chapter II: Painscape* to hit shelves this September. The *Dungeons & Dragons vs. Rick and Morty Tabletop Roleplaying Game Adventure* releases November 19, 2019 with an MSRP of

\$29.99.



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Battle for Baldur's Gate

Fans of the original *Dungeon Mayhem*, rejoice! The first expansion to this wildly popular, easy-to-learn, family-friendly D&D card game comes later this fall (coinciding with the release of *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus*, in fact).



Compatible with the base game, *Battle for Baldur's Gate* introduces two new classes: the ranger, exemplified by Minsc; and the druid, in the form of the shapeshifting Jaheira. With new art by Jake Parker (founder of popular art challenge, [Inktober](#)), expect plenty of appearances by a certain miniature, giant space hamster!

Watch the [announcement](#) during the D&D Live Descent event.

Battle For Baldur's Gate releases September 17, 2019 with an MSRP of \$9.99.

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Stranger Things Season 3



Dungeons & Dragons has never been more popular (in 2018, the *Player's Handbook* and *D&D Starter Set* each sold the most copies ever in Wizards of the Coast's history) and a tip of the hat goes to the children of *Stranger Things*. With *Season 3* of the show coming soon on Netflix, actor David Harbour (Sheriff Hopper in *Stranger Things* and *Hellboy* in the blockbuster recent movie) shared a few roleplaying memories with the **MCM Comic Con** audience.

“I got together with my friends several years ago to play, but I was the Dungeon Master and I’m terrible at that. All my friends wanted to do was *not* do the quest I had designed for them. They were like, ‘Let’s go to the bar and get drunk and harass some people’ after I had spent all this time preparing something.

“But when I was in fifth grade, which was the last time I was a player character in Dungeons & Dragons, I played a cleric. I love the mace

and the healing spells—quite weak to start but then gets very powerful as they go on.”

That mace turned out to be a bit of a theme, as Harbour feels Hellboy would embrace it as his own in the world of Dungeons & Dragons.

“Hellboy certainly wouldn’t be a magic user or a cleric. He’d have to be a fighter or some kind of dark paladin. I like that although his weapon is a gun, really his main weapon is just a big old right hand, which feels to me like a mace or a morning star. Just this big, bashing thing.”

Stranger Things Season 3 premieres on 4 July, 2019 on Netflix.



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Warriors Of Waterdeep

Warriors of Waterdeep is a tactical dungeon adventure where the players assemble a team of heroes to fight deadly enemies across the Forgotten Realms. Collecting and using specific gear gives each character unique abilities, allowing you to play those heroes in the style or flavor you want.

“So the cleric can be more of a fighter or more focused on healing depending on your tastes,” says Stephen David Wark, Brand Manager and Narrative Designer at game developer Ludia.

The game uses tactical dungeon areas set up in a four-zone grid, with players going either left or right at junctions in a *Choose Your Own Adventure*-style decision. “Based on what they can hear from either direction they might choose the easier room or the greater treasure rewards of a difficult room. Doors also have symbols that represent the monster type. So you may know it’s a giant but it could be any kind of giant. Over time you’ll learn that the sound of vigorous chewing means there’s an ogre and you should run the other way!”

Your browser can't play this video.

[Learn more](#)

Carefully managing resources and making the right tactical choice at the right time will determine if players clear a dungeon and win the day. Will you move ahead or retreat, choose between a heal, a buff or the attacking option? Each room awards XP, with a completed dungeon offering greater rewards in a chest. Collecting treasure lets characters upgrade their gear and unlock ever more powerful effects.

“A character’s power is based on the type of gear they’ve acquired, how it’s been upgraded and the combinations—all the heroes have six gear categories, allowing for twenty-six items across different rarities,” Wark explains. “As you level up your gear you earn the XP you need to level up your heroes. As they level up, your overall tier level in the game increases and you then get a choice to add further heroes to your party.”

Warriors of Waterdeep has included a number of named magic items from the *Dungeon Master’s Guide*, in close collaboration with Wizards of the Coast. “I wanted to include a Ravenloft reference even though we haven’t officially visited that region in the game yet and was able to give *Saint Markovia’s Thighbone* from *Curse of Strahd* to Halbenet as an epic weapon. If we can have those legendary items be a part of the game—as items the players can acquire or as extra flavor—I want to include them.”



Players have three different options when it comes to gameplay: Explore; Battle; or Challenge. Exploration is the game's story mode, which sees the party progress through dungeons with increasingly difficult monsters and bosses, while Battle mode sees them go head-to-head against other players using four characters from their party. Once areas have been completed in Explore mode, Challenge allows players to revisit them to gain more rewards. Parties can also access secret rooms in those previous dungeons if specific named characters have reached the correct level.

“In Challenge mode, every area becomes slightly more difficult. You will face the bosses up to three times but their power level will jump considerably each time you battle them,” Wark warns, adding that every time you defeat a boss you gain a reward die to roll on a table of prizes.

Classic Waterdeep characters appear to help you on your way—Laeral Silverhand is the host for the game who doles out missions, while players will benefit from Durnan's generosity at the Yawning Portal. But Wark says that's not the end of the famous faces.

“We have Faraday the tiefling warlock from the Erin M. Evans novels, Calliope the half-elf bard from the *Force Grey* live stream, Raika the half-orc barbarian from the *Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide*, and Saarvin the dragonborn ranger from the *Storm King's Thunder* adventure and a starring role in the *Frost Giant's Fury* comic book,” he says.

“And we have plans to unlock many more in the future. Wizards of the Coast has given us a long list of characters we can play with.”

Warriors Of Waterdeep is available now for Android and iOS devices as a free download with in-game purchases.

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IN THE WORKS



Dungeons & Dragons: Infernal Tides



(Select to view)

Writer Jim Zub and artist Max Dunbar are the creative force behind IDW's official Dungeons & Dragons comic. The pair also both worked on *Baldur's Gate: Descent Into Avernus*: Zub on story development and Dunbar on the art side of the project. With both men so steeped in infernal lore, if you thought Minsc and the characters from the D&D comic were about to miss out on a trip to the Nine Hells, you are sorely mistaken.

"Dungeons & Dragons: Infernal Tides is a direct link to what's happening in Descent Into Avernus," Zub tells *Dragon+*.

"Max Dunbar and I are going to go absolutely nuts as the Baldur's Gate heroes are pulled into Avernus and there'll be crazy epic battles as they get drawn into the Blood War."

Zub is genuinely excited to see what his artist can achieve when the comic goes to Hell. "Having been part of the sourcebook from the ground up, Max now gets to run wild with panel after panel. That will include parts of the D&D canon that have never been visualized this

extensively and things that have never been shown in comics before. It is a bonkers, over-the-top adventure that can only be done sword-and-sorcery style in D&D. I cannot wait for people to see how it pays off.”

IDW’s *Dungeons & Dragons: Infernal Tides* releases November 30, 2019.

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IN THE WORKS



Ghosts of Saltmarsh



(Select to view)

Combining some of the most popular classic adventures from the first edition of D&D along with some of the best nautical adventures from the history of *Dungeon* magazine, *Ghosts of Saltmarsh* hits shelves on May 21, 2019. This collection for levels 1-12 features the following adventures, all fully adapted to fifth edition rules:

- *Sinister Secret of Saltmarsh*
- *Danger at Dunwater*
- *The Final Enemy*
- *Isle of the Abbey*
- *Tammeraunt's Fate*

- *TheStyes*
- *Salvage Operation*

Mike Mearls, Franchise Creative Director for Dungeons & Dragons, got to see one of his own classic stories brought back to life as part of that list.

“Since we were doing a nautical adventure, *Salvage Operation* was in the running, but I couldn’t play favorites. I didn’t want to just put it in there because it’s my baby. At one point Wolfgang Baur and Chris Perkins, both former editors of *Dungeon* magazine, compiled the shortlist they wanted to include. We always knew the U series would be in there but both of them had *Salvage Operation* on their list. It gave me the opportunity to do something you don’t normally get to do, which is revisit something you did fifteen years ago,” he recalls.

“That adventure was originally written for a different roleplaying game called *Shadowrun*, before I converted it to D&D to run as a one-off every once in a while. When I ended up submitting it to *Dungeon*—I was a civilian back then—it got published. So it was nice to go back and tinker with some of the mechanics and how they worked all those years ago and update it to fifth edition. And I think we did a much better job with how we set up the climactic scene this time.”

“I loved reviewing the old adventures and making sure they were up to snuff with fifth edition rules but the best part of working on *Ghosts of Saltmarsh* was working with Mike Mearls to create new content,” adds Kate Welch, Game Designer for Dungeons & Dragons, who took the lead on the project. “That’s where my heart lies. We ended up crafting a whole set of rules about what it’s like to adventure on the sea. Working with Mike on something totally fresh and creative—that’s what that guy was born to do. He is an idea machine and he was an incredible mentor.”

Watch on Twitch

Ghosts of Saltmarsh was released on May 21, 2019 with an MSRP of \$49.95. An alternate art cover with a distinctive design and soft-touch finish is available exclusively in gaming stores. Also look for Beadle and Grimm’s *Sinister Silver Edition*, containing unique components

for your table.



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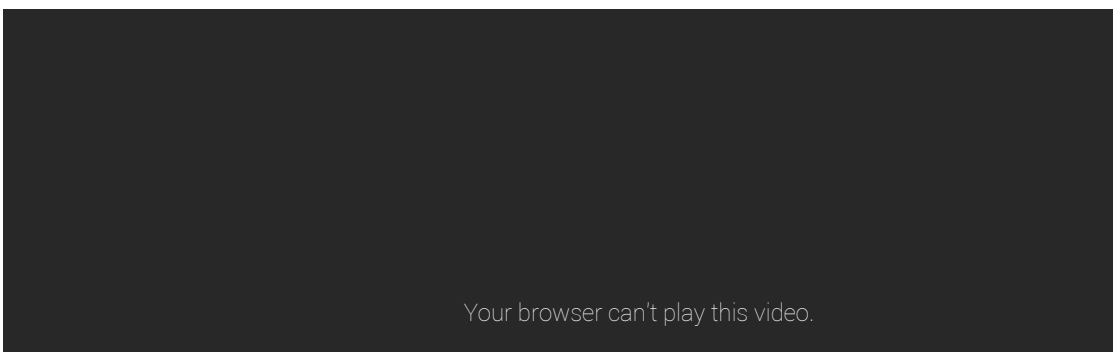


Baldur's Gate 3



(Select to view)

It's been nineteen years since *Baldur's Gate II: Shadows of Amn* was released and eighteen years since *Baldur's Gate II: Throne of Bhaal* followed it up. In that time the clamoring from fans for an official third instalment in the video game series has reached fever pitch. That din has now turned into an almighty cheer with the news that *Baldur's Gate III* is in development.



[Learn more](#)

Larian Studios (*Divinity: Original Sin 2*) places the fate of the Forgotten Realms in your hands, as the return of a malevolent presence intent on devouring its foes from the inside out seeks to corrupt everything that stands in its way.

Gather your party and subscribe for *Baldur's Gate III* updates at [the official website](#).

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IN THE WORKS



For Fans By Fans

With its stall situated in the Baldur's Gate courtyard at D&D Live 2019 , this fan-powered merchandise maker narrowly avoided being stuck in the Hellscape that was mere yards away. But that doesn't mean there aren't more devilishly good products on the way from For Fans By Fans.



(Select to view)

The Blue Dragon's Hoard Dice Bag (art by [Quietsnooze](#) had us at "Dragon's Hoard" and "Dice Bag"—even before it decided to wrap a blue dragon around its lip. Meanwhile, the classic D&D logo gets put to excellent use on the Black Ampersand *Dad's Cap (D&D Trucker Cap also shown). And people called **Ray will definitely enjoy this Beholder Hoodie (art by [Baddrock](#) whether they use the ten attacks to eliminate their foes or not.

Check out the [For Fans By Fans website](#) for more D&D-themed merchandise.

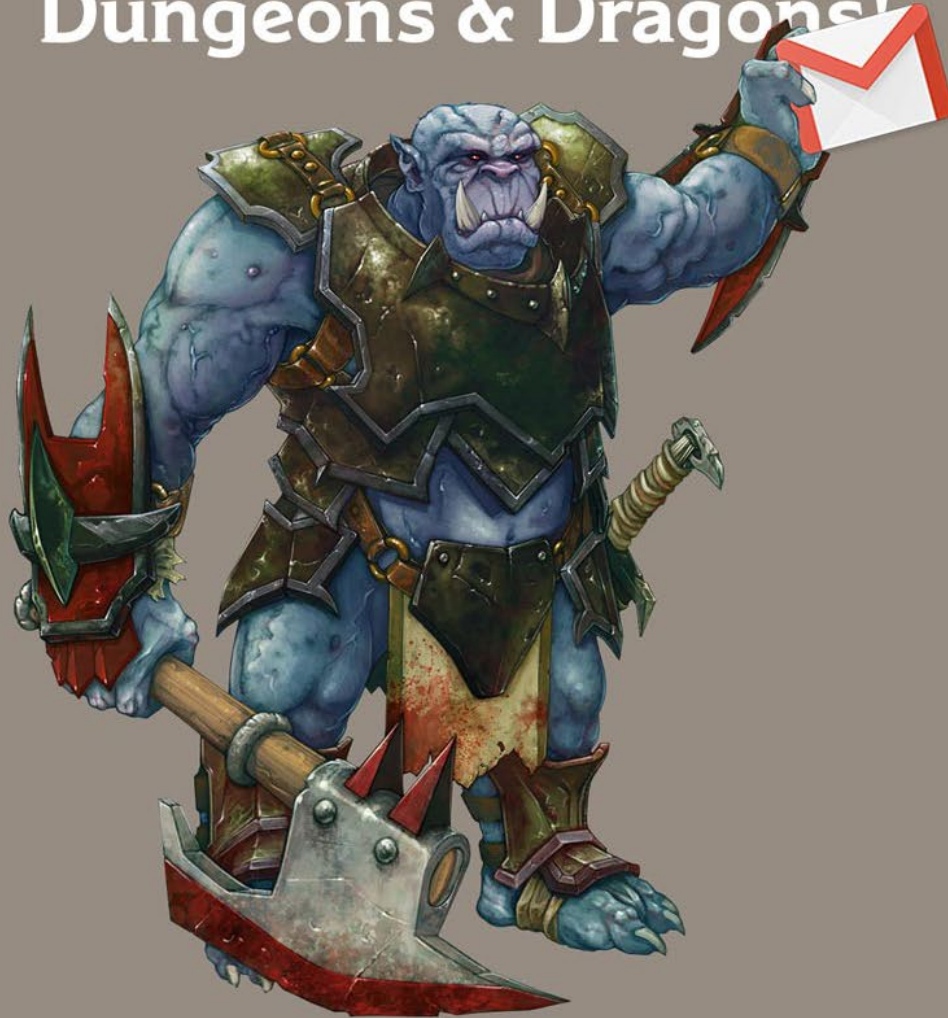
* NO CHILDREN NEED TO HAVE BEEN FATHERED/ADOPTED TO ENJOY THIS CAP.

** YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE CALLED RAY TO ENJOY THIS PRODUCT; OTHER NAMES ARE FREELY AVAILABLE TO WEARERS. HOODIE MAY NOT EMIT ANY OF THE TEN POSSIBLE RAY ATTACKS AND FOES MAY SUFFER NO DAMAGE.

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D&D LIVE 2019: THE DESCENT

Exclusive signings, masses of livestreams, a D&D Epic worthy of Furiosa herself and unicorn on the menu. Welcome to D&D Summer Camp 2019.

“On the design side, you’re always working three years ahead,” says Mike Mearls, Franchise Creative Director for Dungeons & Dragons, as we sit among the flashing lights and blood-

red walls of the first level of the Nine Hells. We're here at *D&D Live 2019: The Descent*, which officially announces and previews *Baldur's Gate: Descent Into Avernus*, the next major Dungeons & Dragons adventure. "So I don't see all of this until I get here and it's actually really cool to walk in like a fan. It takes something that was abstract and makes it concrete, where there's suddenly a real physical representation of something you've worked on, and you don't get that too often in tabletop gaming."

What event organizer Greg Tito and his team of infernal helpers have actually built is something even more amazing than our Hellish surroundings suggest. Everyone coming through the door might as well be wearing flip flops and shouldering a duffle that's stuffed with a sleeping bag: Welcome to D&D Summer Camp!

#DNDSUMMERCAMP



Matthew Lillard (Select to view)

It is like D&D summer camp," says Matthew Lillard, actor and co-founder of *Beadle & Grimm's*. "We come together and you know everyone you love in this space will be here this weekend. Whether they're streaming a game or coming to play in the Adventurers League, they're going to just hang out."

“This weekend is D&D, D&D and nothing but D&D,” adds fellow actor Deborah Ann Woll, picking up on the vibe. “It’s going to be like a summer camp reunion,” agrees **Jennifer Kretchmer**. “There are so many people I’ve never met in person and we’re all so excited that everyone’s going to be in the same place at the same time. Even for *Heroes of the Vale*, it’s going to be the first time we’ll all be in the same room!”



Deborah Ann Woll (Select to view)

B. Dave Walters admits this year feels like a welcome return: “On the one hand, while I was walking in, it feels like I was just here. But it also feels like it was ten years ago in terms of life.” “It helps that we’re at the same location as last year,” offers Nathan Stewart, Senior Director of Dungeons & Dragons. “When you entered the Waterdeep set last year it suddenly gelled in your head what D&D Disneyland could be. This year it’s like that, but you’re going to Baldur’s Gate and Hell and it’s even cooler.”

“Sure it’s in Hell. But let’s be honest, if you could go to the actual underworld for D&D time, you’d go,” Walters admits. “This is great,” says Justin Ziran, head of WizKids, echoing that very statement, “I’ve died and gone to Hell.”



(Select to view)

If you needed any more convincing, just hear from someone who missed out on the party last year. “Last year they asked me if I wanted to come out here and be Halaster,” reveals author Patrick Rothfuss. “But they invited me in the middle of ten solid weeks of travel and I thought, ‘No, I can’t come do your D&D thing.’ Then I got home and I watched it happen online and I was so angry that I wasn’t here. So I sent an email that said, ‘If this happens again next year you gotta have me out.’ And here I am.”

THE WANDERING EMPORIUM

“During your time adventuring in Avernus you may also happen to come upon a wandering market and this is what we see here,” Nathan Stewart says as he leads us on a tour of the *D&D Live 2019* set. “Fans will be able to come in and buy all the new gear.”



(Select to view)

The delights we see before us—everything from Figurines of Adorable Power and Acquisition Incorporated merch to exclusive Wyrnwood dice boxes and fully bound books from the DMs Guild—are as tantalizing as the goods on offer at the Wandering Emporium will be to anyone who has spent too long in Hell. D&D Beyond’s Adam Bradford knows it’s a great opportunity to connect with the community.

“With all the partners, influencers, fans and everyone coming together it really does feel like a D&D summer camp,” he says. “At D&D Beyond we use this event as a big milestone for developing things. We know it’s great if we can drop some announcements at the event and our development teams rallied behind that.”



(Select to view)

“And of course in Hell there’d be Death Saves, right Joe?” Stewart says as we’re bathed in the neon lights of Joe Manganiello’s clothing emporium. “Oh yeah,” the actor and owner/creative director of **Death Saves** replies.

Tito’s team worked closely with the vendors to ramp up the immersion at the event to its highest possible level. Though with a brand name like Death Saves, it wasn’t much of a stretch. The clothing range on Manganiello’s stall is particularly appropriate for a vacation in the Nine Hells, even before he unveils the new collection.



Joe Manganiello (Select to view)

“I run a company called Death Saves so I don’t think you have to do a lot of explaining when it comes to a Hell-themed adventure,” he jokes. “It did mean we put the Orcus shirt into production and we have a Demogorgon shirt on the way, as well as working on a Nine Layers of Hell shirt. And we’ve already redone the art for *A Paladin in Hell* this past year.”



(Select to view)

The Orcus Rage shirt he namechecks uses the pink and purple advertising image which ran back in 1980. That led to an unusual link dating back to the early days of Dungeons & Dragons. “I also had to clear the rights to that image with TSR so it’s a very old-school collaboration. It is the first time in a long time that Dungeons & Dragons and TSR officially appear on anything together in a modern sense.”

Even amidst this summer camp atmosphere, it’s possible for the creative cauldron to bubble with new ideas. “Wait, what?” says Manganiello when Perkins tells him there’s a new death saves mechanic in *Descent Into Avernus*, reminding the actor about *Tomb of Annihilation’s* meat grinder mode which also modified death saves.

“This one’s a little different,” Perkins reveals. “It’s called Bargain Basement Death Saves. When you fail a death save, an archdevil can contact you telepathically and make you a deal offering to let you roll a crit on your next death save in exchange for a favor. Bargain being the bargain you make to pass your death save, Basement being Hell.”

“I’m going to make a shirt of that. We’ll talk,” fires back Manganiello.



(Select to view)

Next to the Emporium in our on-set tour are the pods that will be home to four additional streaming channels over the course of the weekend. As shoppers mingle in the marketplace behind these mini studios, around 160 streamers, influencers and other D&D family members will showcase episodes of their regular online games or play out special adventures. Many of those will be in the unforgiving environs of Avernus—a situation they’ll share with most of the players gracing the main stage over the course of D&D Live.

LIVE ON STAGE

Deborah Ann Woll had the honor of opening the live stage, but her players avoided a potential one-way trip to Avernus during the standalone episode of *Relics & Rarities*. The storyline of *The Descent* then played out in long-form, using four distinct episodes adding more than eight hours of gameplay across two days to tell its tale.

“The four DMs sat around and did a bit of conspiracy work, sharing ideas and batting stuff around. We decided we didn’t want to spoil anything in the adventure, we just wanted to take a few of the toys out of the toy box and play with them,” Perkins tells *Dragon+*.

“There are a bunch of infernal warlords prowling around the wastelands of Avernus, so we picked them up and dropped them into new situations with these characters. That way you get a feel for the setting but we’re not actually spoiling anything that happens in the book.”



(Select to view)

DMs prepped, stories set, parties chosen. Surely the players have the much easier job of turning up and having fun at the table?

“When I’m streaming, the viewer is the sixth or seventh person at the table. And I think of them as a single person. But here you don’t have that illusion. There are definitely all these people here taking the journey with us,” Walters explains, adding there’s no way that could put him off playing. “Any time I get to add the smallest link to the chain of this lore and continuity is just fantastic to me. I told Chris Perkins I will play *literally* anything. If he slipped me a character sheet and I’m a narcoleptic pixie, let’s go!”

“You can feel the tension,” confirms Mike Mearls. “I played on stage last year and I was very aware that people were watching. But the first time you make people laugh—at least for me—I think ‘I like that, let’s make that happen again.’” “By the same token, when you can do something emotional that tugs the heartstrings, you can hear a pin drop,” adds Walters.

While Perkins, Jeremy Crawford, Kate Welch, and Marisha Ray didn’t want to drop too much lore from *Baldur’s Gate: Descent Into Avernus*, one major nugget was



unearthed mid-game. Fans of Critical Role will know that Manganiello's character Arkhan the Cruel wound up with the *Hand of Vecna*, one of the most legendary (and evil!) artifacts in Dungeons & Dragons history. Rather than destroy it as everyone

expected, he cut off his own arm and bound Vecna's appendage to him.

"Normally it is taken by someone who succumbs to the seduction of the power of Vecna. But Arkhan did it for a very altruistic reason. He's a very high-level paladin serving the deity Tiamat. If you worship her, you want to free her from her chains in Avernus, letting the goddess of chaos free to destroy and enslave all of the realms. The hand was a way to potentially do that," Manganiello says.

"There is some secret locked away in that hand that allowed Vecna to planeshift huge cities out of the Shadowfell, for example. If he had the power to do that, surely we could use the hand to free Tiamat?"

After crafting that story and figuring out where Arkhan would now reside, Manganiello wound up talking to Adam Lee, story lead on *Baldur's Gate: Descent Into Avernus*. When Lee found out Arkhan was in Avernus and Joe had "half a book" of material detailing his plans, he made the actor an offer he couldn't refuse.



(Select to view)

“Adam called me back and said, ‘What if Arkhan was in the adventure book?’” Manganiello remembers. “I said, ‘Don’t mess with me man!’ But before you knew it, I was developing artwork with Max Dunbar and that was being turned into WizKids and Gale Force Nine minis. It’s the ultimate fan fiction experience for me.”

As cool as it would be to stumble upon Arkhan in his new home (“You mean Arkhan’s tower?” Jeremy Crawford asked during his live game, giving away a few more morsels of information), would players expect to survive that experience?

“If you play the game a certain way, you might need Tiamat’s help,” Manganiello says. “And the way to get that is to go through Arkhan.”

EPIC ENCOUNTERS

Tito and the Dungeons & Dragons team may have won awards for *The Stream of Many Eyes* in 2018, but no laurels were rested on when it came to prepping *D&D Live 2019*. Fans were on board for the express elevator ride to Hell but feedback from the previous year’s event showed they wanted a seat inside that plummeting metal

box.

“We have made the event a little bigger each year, and although last year’s event was incredible we realized the piece that was missing was the fans getting to sit down and play D&D,” says Liz Schuh, Head of Licensing for Dungeons & Dragons. “Our three sessions of D&D Epic play have been the big addition this year and we wanted them to be as immersive and as premium an experience as possible. We made custom mats featuring the map of Avernus and placed infernal war machines on the center of every table.”



(Select to view)

Adventurers League Epics see multiple tables each containing a DM and a party playing similar storylines. However, their fates are linked depending on the decisions they make and how successful they are in their actions.

“Players make choices at their individual tables and those choices cascade down through the group,” Stewart explains. “So there’s a tabletop game of D&D going on and there’s a meta game going on at the same time with an elder



(Select to view)

DM, which was Chris Lindsay for *Baldur's Gate: Descent Into Avernus*.”

With so much to choose from in a major Dungeons & Dragons adventure, these Epic games centered on one of the coolest elements of the new storyline: infernal war machines. In the harsh landscape of Avernus, they're the only way to travel.

And there was no one-size-fits-all approach, as the first options players encountered (included as PDFs below for those wanting a spotter's guide to infernal war machines) allowed them to pimp out these marauding machines of death exactly as they wanted.

“At first you had to decide as a group how you were going to mod out that tank, deciding which pieces you would add to help you. That might change how it maneuvers, how durable it was or how offensive it was. We chose *all* weapons. Others went more defensive but we had the Lightning Harpoon and the Bonemelt Sprayer,” says Russ More, Dungeon Master of the *Dumbgeons & Dragons* liveplay podcast.

“We first had to take out one of Mad Maggie's encampments, which involved a little more melee. Then it was a road chase where we got to grips with the vehicle combat in which there were four different aspects you could choose, such as scout ahead on recon or take part in an actual race. I know a couple of people who played through the Epic again in later sessions, and they were able to choose different options to have a different experience.



(Select to view)

“We all made it to the end, but at that point one of our team went down. We had an option within the field to bring her back to life by giving up these soul coins which we were trying to collect all the way through. We all decided that we’d made it this far and we really needed the soul coins, so we should keep going. We’re going to put up a memorial for that character in her honor.”

“They’ve really fleshed out this world so it isn’t just your straight-up demons fighting your straight-up devils. There’s plenty of wildlife, for lack of a better term, which has been incorporated to give a worldly feel within this Hellish scape. It’s not just those two opposing forces going at it.”

The following material was used to run infernal war machines encounters at *D&D Live 2019: The Descent* and UK Games Expo. While these rules made for outstanding gameplay at those live events, infernal war machine rules and mechanics may change for the final release of *Baldur’s Gate: Descent into Avernus* (Sept 17, 2019).

Download the [infernal war machine rules PDF](#).

Download the [vehicle chases rules PDF](#).

BOX CLEVER

Another incredible element of the Epic games was a mysterious puzzle box which may or may not have held a major clue as to the wider storyline of *Baldur's Gate: Descent Into Avernus*. Puzzle maker **Kagen Sound** had been asked for the dimensions of his box so a secret element could be fitted inside. He'd also been asked how difficult he thought he could make it for players to solve.

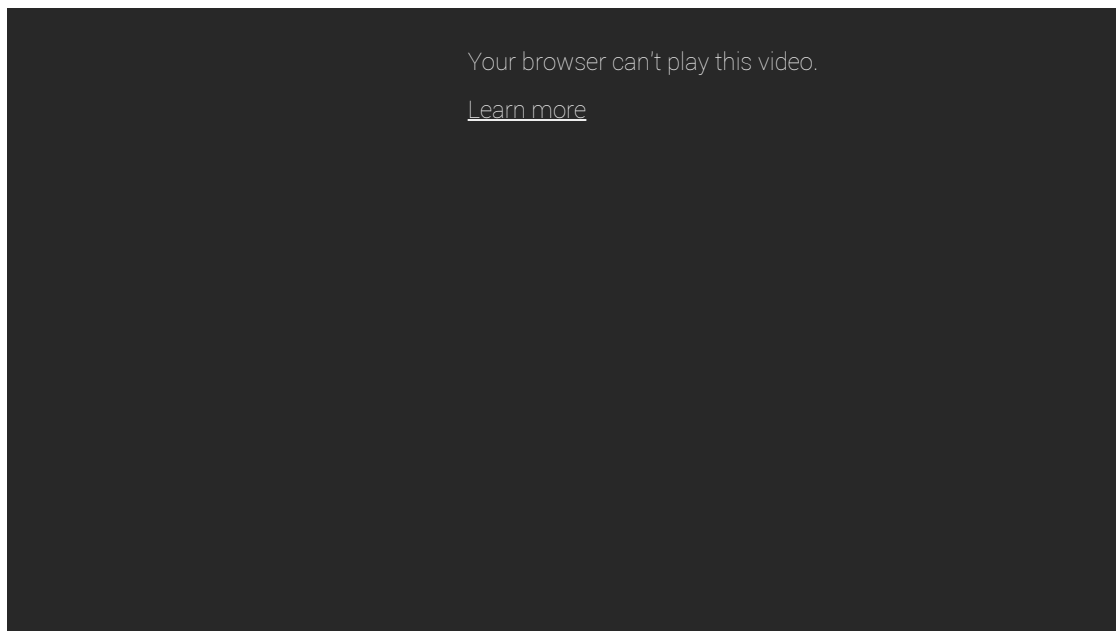
“You tell a puzzle maker, ‘This is a box from Hell. How hard can you make it? It needs to keep someone busy for half an hour at least.’ Of course, I can make something so difficult it can’t be opened, but those stop being fun at a certain point. The box needed to be devious and fiendish but it couldn’t be a safe—it had to eventually open,” he tells *Dragon+*.



(Select to view)

The finished six-sided puzzle took three months to create, from design to construction. Sound took the tiny metal mazes he loves to work with and multiplied that concept by six. The conundrum of these 3D sculptures is solved by navigating a small piece from the start point to the center of the maze. Only then can you progress to the next stage and all six mazes had to be solved to take a peek inside this amazing contraption.

“Sometimes I’m horrible at gauging the difficulty of my work,” Sound admits. “As the designer you know everything about a puzzle and how it works, so it can be hard to understand if it will be obvious or not to another person.



“Then there are those people who are much better at solving puzzles than the average person. If you have a puzzle solver in the room—or not!—that can really change how long it takes to open. It’s an incredibly difficult balance to strike as a designer. I made this piece more difficult to open because of the theme—it’s supposed to be an infernal puzzle box!”

“Fun fact about the puzzle box: It’s pretty difficult to solve and even if you know what you’re doing it takes a while,” says Liz Schuh. “We were going to hand deliver these to the event because they’re delicate and beautiful. Then it occurred to someone that if the TSA asked us what was in the box we would be in big trouble and we would miss our flight, and we had them shipped down instead!”

SIGNS & SOUNDS

As with previous years, fans also got to chat with players and DMs they only usually see or hear through a screen. A busy signing schedule saw all major talent putting their Sharpies to any number of associated products and posters, with some getting to meet their heroes from far beyond Seattle and Los Angeles. Mark Hulmes and Rhiannon Gower from UK stream *The HighRollers*, having flown so far, were glad of the opportunity to say hello in person.



SELECT TO VIEW

“I was really looking forward to meeting the public because that’s something we haven’t really done at our last two big events. We’ve had a lot of Twitter messages from people telling us how excited they are because they never thought they’d get the chance to meet us. That blows our minds!” says Hulmes with genuine excitement.

“The fact that people are going to come and see us still freaks me out. To know there are people coming along and saying such wonderful things is incredibly heart-warming.”

Video unavailable

[Watch on YouTube](#)

Another new addition for *D&D Live 2019* was a live concert featuring bands with a connection to Dungeons & Dragons and wider gaming. This rounded out the weekend with sets from Chris Funk, The Magic Sword, Jason Charles Miller and **The Mountain Goats**, all proceeded over by MC Dan Telfer. *Relics & Rarities*' Xander Jeanneret also rocked the stage with his parody band **The Library Bards**. “My band partner Bonnie Gordon and I were both on different reality shows: she was on *The Quest* on ABC, and I was on *King of the Nerds* on TBS. When we were done we wanted to do a project together and so we started a band!” he says.

“We take top forty hits and transform them into the nerdy versions they should have been in the first place. We dress up in our leathers, which is what we call our renaissance outfits, and we sing about *Star Wars*, *Star Trek*, D&D, and *Harry Potter*—but all set to Taylor Swift songs or Pat Benatar.”



(Select to view)

Capturing the spirit of the weekend the pair performed a cover of AC/DC's *T.N.T.* with the house band, translating that title to D&D.

And as quickly as this upper level of Hell had sprung into being, the event was over. The annual celebration of the D&D community had worked its magic once more.

“This is our opportunity to really bring D&D fans together from all walks of life to just have fun. We take this not only as an opportunity to talk about our next big story, but really to celebrate D&D fandom and everything around it,” says Liz Schuh.

“A big part of what we’re trying to do with this event is provide the dream example of what playing D&D could be like. That’s why we go to the effort of building the sets, working with the lighting and crafting every detail to make the most amazing D&D game you’ve ever sat down to play.”

We couldn’t agree more. Roll on D&D Summer Camp 2020....

Baldur’s Gate: Descent Into Avernus releases September 17, 2019 with an MSRP of \$49.95. Check out this issue’s [Video & Audio Highlights](#) to watch the live-streams from *D&D Live 2019: The Descent*.



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HANDOUT 1. WAR MACHINE RULES SUMMARY

INFERNAL WAR MACHINES

RULES FOR PLAY

BASE WAR MACHINE

BASE WAR MACHINE

Huge land vehicle

Creature Capacity 8 Medium creatures

Cargo Capacity 10 tons

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 150 (damage threshold 10)

Mishap Threshold 35

Speed 100

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	1 (-5)	1 (-5)	1 (-5)

Damage Resistances cold, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, incapacitated, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, stunned, unconscious

CREATURE CAPACITY

The maximum amount of creatures that can fit onto the war machines

DAMAGE THRESHOLD

If a single attack deals less damage than the damage threshold, it is deflected

MISHAP THRESHOLD

If a single attack deals equal or greater damage than the mishap threshold, the war machine suffers a mishap



RIDING A WAR MACHINE

A war machine counts as difficult terrain (i.e. movement costs doubled).

Each war machine has **stations** that you can occupy. Entering a station costs all your movement, but leaving it costs none. Only one creature can fit into a station.

- The character in the **helm** station can use their movement to execute a **basic maneuver** and their action to perform an **attack maneuver** (see Helm Maneuvers).
- A character in a **weapon** station can use their action to make a **weapon attack** with that weapon.

All other creatures embarked on a war machine are considered to be riding on top of it, unless they choose to shelter inside as part of their movement. Characters inside the vehicle can't be targeted by attacks.

HELM MANEUVERS

A character in the Helm station can perform the following:

Basic Maneuver. A character in the helm station can use their **movement** to move the vehicle its speed. During this movement, they can take two turns of up to 90 degrees.

Attack Maneuver. A character in the helm station can use their **action** to perform one of the following:

- Ram** Move up to the vehicle's speed in a straight line, entering Large or smaller creatures' spaces. Each target must make a DC 18 Dexterity save. On a success, it is pushed 5 feet to the nearest unoccupied space. On a failure, it falls prone and takes 28 (8d6) damage. At the end of the move, the vehicle can ram an adjacent creature or object. **Attack:** the driver makes a Dexterity attack (land vehicles). **Hit:** the target takes 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage and the attacker takes half damage.
- Sideswipe** **Target:** one vehicle at close range ahead. **Attack:** Strength check using the vehicle's Strength modifier contested by the target vehicle's Dexterity or Strength check. **Success:** target vehicle pushed into adjacent zone and passengers must succeed on DC 10 Strength check or fall prone.

SOUL COINS

As a bonus action, you can feed 1 soul coin to the machine to achieve one of the following effects:

- Increase the war machine's speed by 20 feet until the end of the character's next turn.
- The next time a weapon on the war machine deals damage before the end of the character's next turn, it deals an additional 10 force damage.
- The infernal war machine regains 20 hit points.

STATION COVER

A creature manning a station has cover:

- The helm station has three-quarter cover (+5 AC and Dexterity saving throws).
- Each weapon station has half-cover (+2 AC and Dexterity saving throws).

If a creature occupying a station is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, it instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw.

HANDOUT 2. BUILDING A WAR MACHINE

BUILDING YOUR WAR MACHINE!

You have four modification points to spend on improvements!

Tick the modifications you would like to buy.

VEHICLE NAME

VEHICLE STATISTICS

BASE WAR MACHINE

Huge land vehicle

Creature Capacity 8 Medium creatures

Cargo Capacity 10 tons

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 150 (damage threshold 10)

Mishap Threshold 35

Speed 100

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	1 (-5)	1 (-5)	1 (-5)

Damage Resistances cold, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, incapacitated, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, stunned, unconscious

STATION: HELM (1 CREW)

By using all of its movement speed, the creature occupying this station can move the vehicle up to its speed and make one 90 degree turn.

A creature has three-quarters cover (+5 bonus to AC and Dexterity saving throws) while it occupies this station. When it is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, it instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw.

STATION: WEAPON (1 CREW PER STATION / 2 STATIONS MAX)

A creature occupying this station can use the weapon fitted to it.

A creature has half cover (+2 bonus to AC and Dexterity saving throws) while it occupies this station. When it is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, it instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw.

BASIC IMPROVEMENTS

☐ **RAKING SCYTHES (1 PT)**
Deal 16 (3d10) slashing damage to any creature on ground that you drive past.

☐ **DURABILITY (2PTS)**
Increases hit points by 50 and damage threshold by 5

☐ **MANEUVERABILITY (2PTS)**
Speed increases by 20 feet.

☐ **RAM (3PTS)**
Ram attack damage increases to 33 (6d10) bludgeoning damage and causes no damage to your own vehicle.

WEAPON STATIONS (MAX TWO)

☐ **INFERNAL SCREAMER (1PT)**
Target: One creature, object, or vehicle within 120 feet. *Effect:* Target makes a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, it takes 22 (4d10) thunder damage plus 11 (2d10) thunder damage if within 60 feet. Half damage on a successful save.

☐ **LIGHTNING HARPOON (1PT)**
Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2d8 piercing damage plus 2d6 lightning damage. If the target is a vehicle, its speed is reduced by 5 feet until the damage is repaired with a successful DC 10 Intelligence check made as an action.

☐ **LIGHTNING FLAIL (2PTS)**
Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 15 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 18 (3d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage plus 5d8 lightning damage. Up to three other creatures within 30 feet of the target make a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw, taking 5d8 lightning damage on a failed save. Half damage on a successful save.

☐ **WRECKING BALL (2PTS)**
Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8d8 bludgeoning damage. If the target is a vehicle, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or immediately move its speed in a random direction.

☐ **THUNDER CANNON (2PTS)**
Target: One point within 120 ft. *Effect:* Each creature within 30 feet of the point must make a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw, taking 5d10 bludgeoning damage plus 2d12 thunder damage on a failed save. Half damage on a successful save.

☐ **GORGER SAW (2PTS)**
Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6d10 slashing damage. If the target is a vehicle, its AC is reduced by 2 until it is repaired. A successful DC 10 Strength check made as an action repairs the damage.

☐ **BONEMELT SPRAYER (2PTS)**
Target: Creatures in a 60-foot cone. *Effect:* Each creature in the cone makes a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw, taking 2d10 fire damage plus 4d8 acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Creatures that fail the saving throw are drenched in burning acid and take 1d10 fire damage plus 2d8 acid damage at the end of their turns. An affected creature or another creature within 5 feet of it can take an action to scrape off the burning fuel.

VEHICLE CHASES

If the players get into a vehicle chase through Avernus, use following Chase Complications table to add drama to the encounter (see Chases in chapter 8 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

Avernus Chase Complications

D29	Complication
1	You head straight into a herd of grossly fat nupperibo devils. A vehicle makes a DC 15 Strength or Dexterity check (your choice) to get through the herd. On a failed check, the herd counts as 60 feet of difficult terrain. If a vehicle ends its turn in the herd, each embarked creature must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw with disadvantage or take 1d4 piercing damage.
2	Uneven ground threatens to slow your progress. A vehicle makes a DC 10 Dexterity check to navigate the area. On a failed check, the ground counts as 40 feet of difficult terrain.
3	A massive dust storm descends on you. Visibility is reduced to 20 feet. Vehicle have disadvantage on their next Chase Complications ability check. Embarked creatures that are exposed must make a DC 10 Constitution check. On a failed check, embarked creatures spend their next turn coughing, and can make no attacks.
4	Your path takes you right into a swarm of hell hornets. The swarm makes an opportunity attack against a vehicle and any embarked creatures that are exposed. (+5 to hit; 4d4 piercing damage on a hit).
5	A field of bubbling tar pits looms before you. A vehicle makes a DC 10 Dexterity check. On a fail, it becomes restrained. At the start of each turn, the driver can make a successful DC 15 Strength check using the vehicle's Strength to free the vehicle.
6	You barrel toward a patch of Hell Sand. The vehicle's driver makes a Wisdom (Perception) check to spot and avoid it. On a fail, the vehicle spins out of control and finishes its move going in a random direction.
7	Piles of devil bones from some ancient battle litter the landscape in great mounds. The rumbling of your Infernal war machine threatens to cause an avalanche. Vehicles make a Dexterity check (Huge vehicles and bigger have disadvantage). On a fail, you trigger an avalanche, and take 5d4 bludgeoning damage. The terrain counts as difficult for the next 40 feet.
8	You come upon a sudden 15-foot drop off. A vehicle must make a DC 10 Dexterity check. A vehicle takes 8d4 bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.
9	Columns of flame erupt all around you. A vehicle makes a DC 10 Dexterity check or take 8d6 fire damage. Embarked creatures that are exposed take half damage.
10	An infernal creature chases after you. The DM chooses the creature.
11	Spiked chains burst from the cracked ground to lash the hull of your Infernal war machine, making a melee attack against each embarked creature at +4 to hit, dealing 11 (2d6+4) bludgeoning damage.
12	You come upon a field of immense, teetering stones that seem to defy gravity. It seems to you that only a small bit of effort could bring them tumbling down. Each pillar has AC 17, and damage threshold of 35. If the damage threshold is exceeded, the pillar collapses in a random direction.
13	You speed toward the enormous, skeletal remains of some anonymous long-dead monster. The bones looming above you are ancient and brittle. A vehicle must make a DC 10 Strength check or crash. Vehicles of Gargantuan size automatically succeed.
14	You pass by what looks like an infernal war machine graveyard. A dozen or so derelict vehicle dot the landscape, some half buried in the gathered dust. If a vehicle dashes, it must make a DC 10 Dexterity check or crash into one of the derelict Infernal war machines.
15	Your Infernal war machine races through a cloud of bleak gnats. The infernal insects burst against the hull, shedding magical darkness around them for 2 rounds.
16-20	Relatively open expanse (no complication).

MISHAPS

Infernal war machines are dangerous but temperamental machines. The hazards of Avernus's vast wastes and the onslaught of enemies are more than enough to push vehicles to breaking points.

Roll on the Mishaps table when one of the following occurs to a war machine:

- The war machine suffers a critical hit.
- The war machine takes an amount of damage from a single attack or effect equal to or greater than its mishap threshold value.
- A risky or difficult maneuver is attempted with the war machine (at the DM's discretion).

Mishaps

d20	Effect	Repair DC
1	Engine explosion! The vehicle's engine bursts into flame, dealing 6d6 fire damage to the vehicle and creatures embarked on the vehicle or within 10 feet of it. The vehicle immediately moves double its speed in a straight line. Until a repair is made, the vehicle takes 2d6 fire damage at the start of each of its turns.	20 (Str)
2	Steering mechanism locked! The vehicle cannot make turns, and automatically fails Dexterity checks and saving throws until a repair is made.	15 (Str)
3	Soul energy is bleeding out! The vehicle's speed is reduced by half until a repair is made.	15 (Dex)
4-6	Weapon destroyed! DM determines which weapon is no longer operational.	—
9	Caustic smoke! Thick smoke spews out from the Infernal war machine to engulf the creature occupying the helm. The creature takes 5 (2d4) acid damage. If its eyes are exposed, it is blinded until the end of its next turn.	—
10	Engine shriek! The Infernal war machine lets out a high-pitch scream that echoes in the minds in all who hear it. All creatures within 60 feet of the vehicle must succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence save or take 14 (3d6) psychic damage.	—
11-12	Damaged wheel! The vehicle's speed is reduced by 15 feet. The vehicle has disadvantage on Dexterity checks and saving throws until a repair is made.	15 (Dex)
13-16	Skid! The vehicle has disadvantage on all Dexterity checks and saving throws for 1 round.	—

16-19	Armor failure! The vehicle's AC is reduced by 2 until the armor is repaired.	10 (Str)
20	Flip! The vehicle jerks to one side, and rolls. All embarked creatures must succeed on a DC 20 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall from the vehicle. Roll any die. On an even result, the war machine lands back on its wheels. On an odd result, the war machine lands on its back and requires a successful Strength (Athletics) check made as an action to be righted. The DC for the check equals 15 for a Large war machine, 20 for a Huge war machine, and 25 for a Gargantuan war machine.	



D&D Classics

A look back at past forays into the Nine Hells!

The Nine Hells

Dragon Anniversary:

Return to the Nine Hells

By Rich Baker

Illustrations by Jack Crane, Anne Stokes, Warren Mahy, Daarken, Carl Frank, Thomas M. Baxa, Eric Deschamps, and Dave Allsop

In 1983, Ed Greenwood laid out the D&D game's first great vision for extraplanar adventure in a two-part article appearing in *Dragon* issues 75 and 76. Before "The Nine Hells" articles, all that we knew about Hell in the world of *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* is that it had nine levels and was home to the race of devils (and a few stray lawful evil gods). But in *Dragon* 75, Ed Greenwood took us all on an unforgettable tour, filled with vistas of infernal grandeur and dozens of the most fully realized villains to be found anywhere in the multiverse. It all began with a wonderful full-page illustration of two heroes standing over the smoking corpse of a barbed devil, and perhaps the biggest, boldest, and most purely epic call to action ever written for a D&D game: *I ride on the Hells tomorrow.*

"The Nine Hells" instantly multiplied the scope of every existing D&D campaign, adding vast new territories for ambitious heroes in any world to someday explore—if they dared. For the first time, *Dungeon Masters* gained a vocabulary and a set of imagery to describe what awaited characters who ventured into the Outer Planes. Unlike the brief, focused forays contained in adventures such as *Queen of the Demonweb Pits*, the Nine Hells were presented as the ultimate sandbox. Here's what's here, these are the challenges, these are the sights, these are the threats, and these are the great powers who rule over these majestic and terrible domains. Because of Ed Greenwood's "The Nine Hells," thousands of characters have slogged across the burning sands of Avernus, skulked through

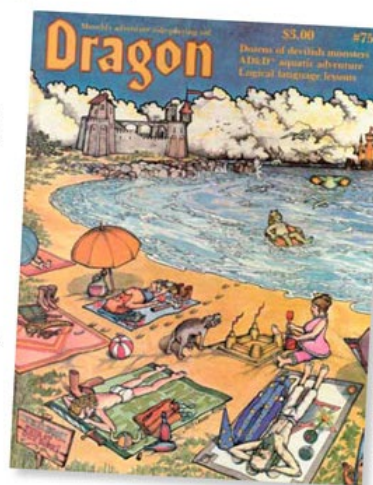
the iron streets of Dis, or battled for their lives in the frigid wastes of Stygia. The master villain of many an adventure waited for the heroes in some hellish retreat . . . or in fact turned out to be one of the arch-devils in person.

To this day, the layers of Avernus, Dis, Minauros, Phlegethos, Stygia, Malbolge, Maldomini, Cania, and Nessus remain the best known of all the outer planes. Ask any D&D player what the first layer of Acheron is like or what the names of the Seven Heavens are, and you'll probably get a blank stare. But every true D&D fan knows that you'll run into fireballs and spined devils on the plains of Avernus, that Geryon was once the lord of Stygia, and that gelugons—or ice devils—haunt Cania, the frigid eighth hell. These grim and terrifying domains belong to every D&D game. They comprise part of the common legends and lore players from all over the world can share and trade stories about. And it was Ed Greenwood's brilliant, evocative vision that brought the Nine Hells to your gaming table.

Thanks, Ed!

About the Author

Richard Baker is an award-winning game designer who has written numerous adventures and sourcebooks, including *Manual of the Planes*™, the *DARK SUN*® Campaign Setting, and the *D&D*® *GAMMA WORLD*™ Roleplaying Game. He's a New York Times bestselling author of *Forgotten Realms* novels such as *Condemnation*, the *Last Mythral* trilogy, and the *Blades of the Moonsea* series. Rich is currently the Design Manager for *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS*® at Wizards of the Coast.



How could we discuss devils without mentioning this classic series? Back in *Dragon*+ #18 we re-released Ed Greenwood's *The Nine Hells*. Originally appearing in *Dragon* magazine #75 and #76 (1983), and then again in *Dragon* #400's anniversary issue, here it is once more:

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The Nine Hells Revisited



Since that was a bit of cheat (considering we've showcased *The Nine Hells* twice already), here's a bit more: *Dragon* magazine #91 continued the series with the following material. As the author himself states, research into the nature and affairs of the diabolic, particularly those specialized investigations that can be carried out only in the Nine Hells, is understandably perilous. Much is yet unknown, or is largely conjecture; here follows more information about devils and their doings, and the Nine Hells,

gathered from many scattered sources:

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Zariel



And finally, while not exactly material from a past issue of *Dragon*, let's look back at 2018's *Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes*. For "all who enter and exit the Nine Hells must pass through Avernus, so the infernal armies muster on this layer. Here, the amnizus guard the citadels overlooking the River Styx, where much of the fighting of the Blood War takes place, and devils gather to invade the Abyss. Anyone hoping to reach the lower layers must first contend with the darkness of this layer and the myriad threats it houses.

And here, no less than Zariel herself has the ultimate say over who comes and goes."

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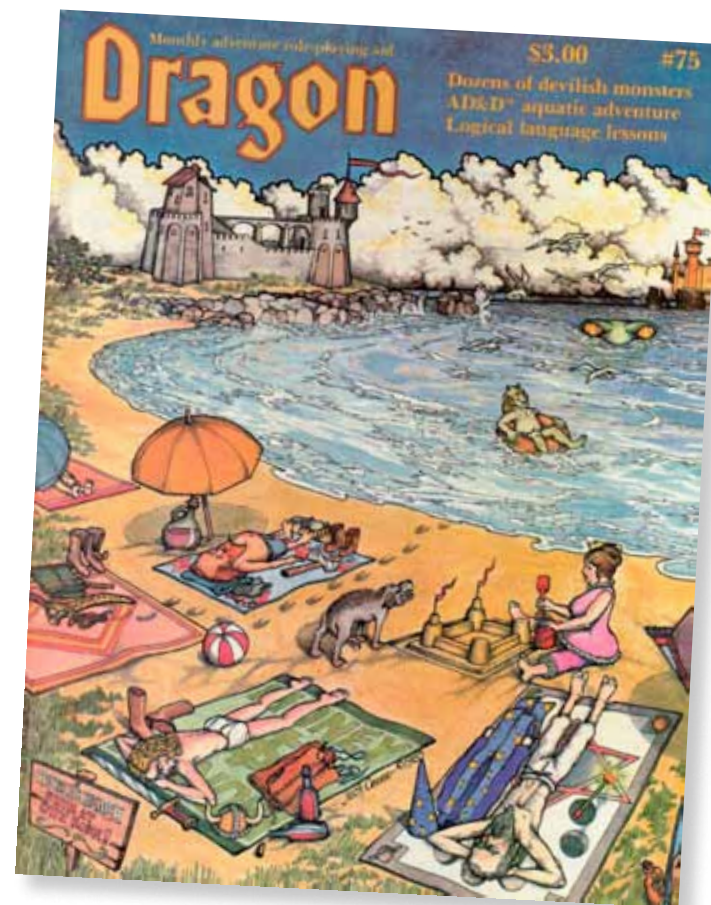
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Dragon 75 and Dragon 76

The Nine Hells Parts 1 & 2

By Ed Greenwood

A devil . . . thought the adventurer. Now there is a fitting foe! Moreover, his lands would not be safe until it was no more, and so he set about tracking it.

And a little later . . . There are more where that one came from, he thought to himself, standing over its smoldering remains.

"They could well come again," he said aloud.

"Yes," agreed the paladin who had fought at his side. "You have joined an endless battle, my lord. But if you weary of fighting it here, amid that which you hold dear, then come with me—I ride on the hells tomorrow."

Devils and demons have always been favorite monsters in AD&D™ play, particularly with upper- and mid-level characters. As a DM, I have been reluctant to include devils until I had done some work on the Nine Hells—for the simple reason that player characters, once they are introduced to devils and find out facts about them, are sure to want to carry the fight to the enemy's home ground. I am basically kind and fair (what DM isn't?), and it goes against the grain not to allow characters to enter the hells after they've gone to some trouble and expense to secure the means to do so. Not permitting them to make the trip, when they deserve to be given the try, condemns the characters to endlessly be on the defensive when fighting devils. Far more so than (for instance) the chaotic layers of the Abyss, the environment of the Nine Hells demands that the DM do considerable preparation before play moves to that environment. There are gaps and uncertainties in available official information about the Hells. Briefly, this article will

touch on some of these and explain the reasoning I have adopted; other DMs may well make different decisions. The treatment of the Nine Hells offered here leaves ample room for a DM to make the hells more as he or she sees them, and/or to include specific features therein for a particular adventure.

The very name of the styx devil (see the *Fiend Folio® Tome*, pp. 25–26) implies that the river Styx exists in some form in the Nine Hells of the AD&D multiverse, and we know (from the *Deities & Demigods™ Cyclopedia*) that the sahuagin deity, Sekolah, swims in the deepest part of the seas of the Nine Hells. Sekolah is a giant white shark that "hunts only the largest and fiercest of prey." The illustration in the DDG book suggests that a giant squid is part of such prey. Might Sekolah also hunt dragon turtles, or giant octopi? Or are there aquatic leviathans unique to the hells?

There are other details a DM must resolve, too: Gruumsh, Maglubiyet, Kurtulmak and some human deities (Set, for example) named in the DDG book are placed in the Nine Hells. Gruumsh and Maglubiyet are locked in unending battle with the armies they command, and these armies had best be geographically placed in relation to hell's nine planes. In issue 64 of *Dragon®* magazine, Mr. Gyax moves the first three deities (to Gehenna, Gehenna, and Acheron respectively), but it is unclear whether this change applies officially to the AD&D rules, or just to the *WORLD OF GREYHAWK™* campaign setting. Certainly, from a design standpoint, these deities are best removed, for if the archdevils themselves (see the

DDG book) are merely lesser gods, how do they exist amicably with Set, a greater god who conceivably has the power to (lawful evil, remember?) rule them.

If any deities are to be allowed in the hells, the suggestion from here is that they be confined to the first (uppermost) plane, which can serve as a universal "doormat" area for visitors and non-devils, and a staging area both for any standing armies or defenders of the hells, and for foraging parties who are to leave the hells on various missions.

Most player-character invasions of the hells, too, would arrive on the first plane. It is, however, necessary for the DM at invasion time to know something of the other planes of hell, since from those planes will come the reactions to any such invasions. Here we depart from the official, and move into this writer's attempts to make the Nine Hells a playable environment.

Reality in the Realms

In the Realms (my campaign world), I have followed the idea of the shifts specified by Mr. Gyax in *Dragon* 64, removing all non-devil deities from the Nine Hells except for Sekolah. In the campaign pantheon there exists a greater god of lawful evil alignment (Bane, by name) who is worshipped by humans. The problem of how to deal with such a deity vis-à-vis the archdevils has been avoided by separating the two (the deity and the devils) entirely. Bane does not attempt to hinder or control Asmodeus or the other devils because they serve his purposes acting on their own, freeing Bane to do his work elsewhere. By

strictly avoiding the devils, Bane maintains an unwitting (?) but steadfast and quite powerful set of allies without fearing treachery from them, and without expending time and effort in the intrigues of training, organizing, or commanding infernal armies.

High-level clerics of Bane regard devils as a group of lawful evil beings who can be commanded into various services by the proper means, and who can be expected to act thus-and-so due to their lawful evil nature and the social organization of the hells, but who are self-interested and not willing servants of Bane or of the clerics. This is essentially no different from the way clerics of other deities regard the devils; the diabolical are never dealt with in safety and trust. To what extent Bane and the archdevils know of each other, or have contact, can remain vague—part of a DM’s “design elbow room”—for now. (Bane is geographically separated from the Nine Hells, too—he is in Acheron.)

Using the rules

Various hints about the nature of the Nine Hells are found in the rules, such as the suggestion (by inference from the description of bone devils, and from the cold-related powers that Geryon and the bone devils possess) that Geryon’s plane is a rather icy place. By gathering the information contained in the AD&D rulebooks, and embellishing these facts with information from literature, one can cobble together a geographical picture of the Nine Hells.

A vast number of writers have offered their own religious or primarily fantastic conceptions of the infernal regions (those lands of the dead that are linked with evil spirits and, usually, punishment of the souls of the dead). The chief sources of geographically detailed descriptions of the hells are listed here, for DMs who want to develop their own versions: Dante’s *Inferno*; Homer’s *Odyssey*, book XI; Virgil’s *Aeneid*, book VI; Spenser’s *Faerie Queene*, book II canto 7; Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso*, book XVII; Tasso’s *Jerusalem Delivered*, book IV; Milton’s *Paradise Lost*;

Fenelon’s *Telemaque*, book XVIII; and William Backford’s fantasy romance *Vuthek*. Libraries are the best sources for the above books.

Also valuable are modern fantasy versions of the hells drawn from the original sources, such as *Inferno* by Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle (a 1976 Pocket Books paperback, still in print). There are many other such examples in fantasy literature, and many comparable underworlds (those in Ursula LeGuin’s *The Farthest Shore* and H.P. Lovecraft’s *The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath* leap to mind) also to be found therein that will yield ideas of flora, fauna, and physical conditions to a DM creating his or her own version of the Nine Hells. What follows is my own (unofficial) conception.

Servants and vassals

Before plunging into a plane-by-plane description, a note regarding servant and vassal devils: These beings are useful in that they help to delay any direct intervention by archdevils in play, stretching out the fun and providing player characters with individual, significant foes of lesser power before bringing the “big guns” onstage. To characters (such as powerful clerics) in the Realms who are privy to such information, the role and descriptions of these servant devils is known to be as follows:

Some devils, even those of sufficient power to attain archdevil rank, see their safest position in the present infernal regime to be that of lieutenant to an archdevil. Their precise reasons for this attitude are known only to themselves, but it is thought that some prefer to maintain a low profile so that they can work “behind the scenes,” and others prefer to act in the name of an archdevil, thereby disclaiming responsibility for their own actions.

A DM should bear in mind that there is certainly some degree of silent cooperation between these servant devils, who wish to avoid being openly set against each other (i.e., in combat) or against any archdevil. This cooperation must be obvious to the

archdevils, who seem to tolerate it (Baalzebul the least), and some believe that Asmodeus quietly aids and encourages it, for it adds stability to the present status quo—in which he is on top. Fear and/or mindfulness of general strategy (ahead of short-term tactics) prevent most open rivalries between devils from escalating further than exchanges of nasty words and cruel pranks. A player character should *not* be able to play one devil against another like a Machiavelli might manipulate his courtiers; bear in mind that most devils are of reasonably high intelligence.

1. AVERNUS

The uppermost plane of the Nine Hells is ruled by Tiamat, the Chromatic Dragon, and serves as a home to all lesser unique devils. These are devils with individual names and characteristics, and powers of greater magnitude than those of a pit fiend (for all such unique devils of lesser power are soon destroyed by their enemies and the cruelty of their fellows), which are not otherwise placed in the hells as ruling archdevils or their direct servants.

There are approximately fifty of these lesser unique devils; embittered, frustrated beings who torment the lemures and spined devils of this plane and viciously attack all intruders. Chief among them is Nergal, who like all of his outcast fellows plots and schemes constantly to win a higher rank, but through hopes of reward always eagerly and enthusiastically obeys commands issued by the archdevils. Most such commands concern the defense of the hells against all intruders, for the dukes of hell have no wish to deal with intruders on their own ground—the plane or planes they rule—when such disorderly business can be conducted elsewhere. The uppermost plane of the hells thus serves as a marshalling area and training ground for infernal armies, and is (preferably to the devils) the place in which intruders are dealt with.

It is a plane of darkness, consisting of rocky crags and hillocks, a desolate wasteland of stunted,



poisonous vegetation and bare rock. Many concealed pits lined with filth-smeared stakes and the like have been prepared for intruders. Avernus has no roads or buildings, but many caves and warrens have been dug out of the rocks; most are devils' homes, as unwary travelers seeking shelter will soon learn.

At irregular intervals the darkness is lit by fireballs (as in the spell, varying in size and damage from 2d6 to 7d6) that form spontaneously from the vapors of the air, bursting at any height above the ground. If one should notice a glowing, swirling effect in the air, one soon discovers that a fireball will burst in that location one round later. The precise cause of these fiery discharges is unknown, but it is natural

and not under the control of any devil or other creature. A *gust of wind* spell will push a forming fireball away, but a *dispel magic* will not stop it from forming, or negate its effects. (Editor's note: DMs using *Avernus* in play should take note of the alterations in magic spell effects that are prevalent there and on the other planes of the Nine Hells. That information will be part of the second installment of this article.)

Any non-devil lawful evil creatures not native to the hells (such as the occasional beholder), if they are to be found in the infernal regions at all, will be found on Avernus unless specifically located elsewhere by order of an archdevil. One noteworthy example of such creatures are the nycadaemons (see

the *Fiend Folio Tome*). These have the power to move freely about the Nine Hells, but they are disliked and distrusted by the archdevils and may well be met with physical opposition if they appear uninvited on a plane other than Avernus. (DMs should bear in mind that a nycadaemon might aid a party of adventurers traveling in the hells, to further its own ends.)

Avernus is nominally ruled by Tiamat, the Chromatic Dragon. The mother of all evil dragonkind holds Avernus through the support of Asmodeus, but her actual authority extends only as far as her physical reach. Most of the inhabitants of the plane avoid her, not wishing to serve as her meals.

The Chromatic Dragon spends most (90%) of her time sprawled in her lair, the great caverns known as Azharul, "The Dragonspawn Pits." Here she is attended by her bodyguards, five huge adult male dragons—one white, one black, one green, one blue, and one red (for details, refer to the *Monster Manual*). She is constantly guarded by these consorts, and when not plotting, feeding, enjoying cruel sport or facing danger, Tiamat will be found mating with one of them within a protective ring formed by the other four. She bears litters of 1–4 dragonets (or "mewlings": very young dragons born conscious and in control of their feeble powers) after an average gestation period of 6 days. Tiamat occasionally (7% chance at any given time) travels via the Astral Plane or Ethereal Plane, perhaps to give birth to a litter on the Prime Material Plane (or Planes, if the multiverse of your campaign includes "parallel worlds")—sometimes grudgingly, at the behest of Asmodeus, but more often to further some plan of her own.

The scant remainder of her time is spent roaming Avernus; very rarely, she journeys to the palace of Asmodeus. Those of Tiamat's offspring that are born and remain on Avernus occupy themselves with hunting down and bringing back food for Tiamat and her consorts while the Chromatic Dragon is in her lair. These offspring/underlings are of all sizes, types,

and ages of evil dragonkind, and all are aggressive, cruel, and in good health. Injured, weak, or disobedient specimens are soon eaten by Tiamat, or by others at her direction; she also dines on slain dragons, including slain consorts who have displeased her, and all newborn spawn who are multiheaded or otherwise chromatic in nature. The few of her spawn that survive to achieve “huge adult” status serve as replacements for her consorts.

Note that Tiamat will have full amounts of treasure (as shown in the *Monster Manual* entry) only while in her lair. She may seize small amounts of treasure when on the Prime Material Plane, but only quantities which she can transport herself, since her bodyguards are unable to accompany her when she leaves Avernus. They guard her hoard in Azharul diligently in her absence, for she will notice if even a single bauble is gone!

The treasure prized most highly by Tiamat is magic—specifically, magic-user spells of 1st to 5th level which are new to her. With these she can increase her personal power, and consequently she is always seeking more powerful offensive and defensive spells which she can study, experiment with, and modify for her own use. Note that Tiamat needs time and trial to modify a written magic-user spell from the standard form to her own (verbal component only) form of casting.

While on the Prime Material Plane, she will reveal herself in the open only if she believes a fair chance exists to gain such spells in so doing. Otherwise, her visits to the Prime Material tend to be secretive affairs, for she feels uneasy without her bodyguards. In the past, it is said, many men (and some of other races) worshipped Tiamat, and her visits were triumphs of worship, adulation, pampering, and the bestowal or riches and magical information to the extent of human experimentation and mastery upon the Chromatic Dragon—but if this was indeed so, it is no longer the case. Nowadays, evil dragons will still acknowledge their allegiance to her, but this is a

“worship” born of fear and respect rather than love or loyalty.

Although Tiamat will battle (attempting to kill and eat) individual devils without hesitation, she will never knowingly attack an archdevil or a lieutenant to an archdevil. She rules her spawn by force and fear, but her will is enforced on Avernus by 40 companies of abishai under the command of *Malphas*, 29 similar companies led by *Amduscias*, and 3 companies of erinyes under the command of the pit fiend Goap. (Names printed in *italic* type indicate devils who are individually described in the text that follows.) These forces are always busy, for Avernus is constantly dealing with intruders and the machinations of the “rabble of devilkin”—former consorts fallen from favor, and other unique devils too weak or too mistrusted to gain or hold a position in the hierarchy of the hells. These beings are constantly attempting to gather enough support to win (at least) a position in the service of Tiamat, perhaps by supplanting one of the incumbent vassal devils, and are always moving to avoid the armies searching for them. Among these outcast devils are names such as *Rumjal*, *Caim*, *Bist*, *Cahor*, *Dagon*, *Azazel*, *Armaros*, *Kochbiel*, *Nisroch*, and *Nergal*.

Tales are told of a mysterious archdevil, *Astaroth*, said to be mightier in power than any devil save *Asmodeus* himself (see Alexander von Thorn’s article, “The Politics of Hell,” printed in *Dragon* 28 and reprinted in the *Best of Dragon Vol. II* anthology), who dwells elsewhere than the Nine Hells, apart from the present regime, working alone to advance his secret ends. This devil represents the greatest threat to *Asmodeus*; with *Astaroth*’s support, *Mephistopheles*, *Baalzebul*, or even a lesser archdevil such as *Geryon* could conceivably wrest control of the Nine Hells from the Great Devil himself. But even the existence of *Astaroth* is uncertain; he is definitely not an avowed force in the hells at this time.

AMDUSCIAS (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: *See below*

HIT DICE: 92 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 20%

TREASURE TYPE: *See below*

NO. OF ATTACKS: *See below*

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *See below*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: +2 *or better weapon to hit*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: *See below*

PSIONIC ABILITY: 216

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Amduscias is a duke in the service of Tiamat, ruler of Avernus, and leads 29 companies of abishai. He is a being of long memory and cunning strategies. He can *shape change* at will into a dirty yellow unicorn with eyes of flame and a purple horn, a hawk-headed man (he usually wears dark red or black robes when in this form), or his favored form: a wolf with a prehensile, constricting serpent’s tail. He does not need, and does not wear, armor in any of his forms.

When in unicorn form, *Amduscias* attacks with his horn (acts as a *sword of wounding*, for 2–9 damage), or his hooves (2 per round, for 2–10 damage each). His maximum movement rate in this form is 18”; he can “bolt” from a standing start, and some say that when horses spook or gallop uncontrollably, it is because *Amduscias* has affected them.

In humanlike form *Amduscias* has average Dexterity, and two or three attacks (fists for 1–2 each and beak for 1–8, or weapon and beak). *Amduscias* is ambidextrous and can wield two weapons if they are small (e.g., daggers or darts). This devil has above average Strength when in humanlike form, and a

long, curved beak somewhat like a hummingbird's in appearance. This beak is, however, terrifically strong and sharp. His move in this form is 12".

Amduscias prefers to fight in wolf form; his movement rate is 18", and he attacks with two raking foreclaws and his jaws, or his hind claws and tail. If in a position to do so, he can use all six of these attacks in a round, against as many targets. The claws do 3-12 damage each, the jaws 1-20, and the tail 1-10 constriction damage per round plus additional damage if Amduscias uses it to immerse a held victim in water, batter a victim against a rock, etc. The tail will loosen its grip if it is severed, or if it is dealt 17 points of damage in any single round or 26 points of damage over a succession of rounds.

Amduscias can change forms in one round (during which he can do nothing else except speak), and is restricted to the forms described. He can use the spell-like powers listed below, one at a time, once per round. Note that (as with other devils) verbal, somatic, and material components—as spell-casters on the Prime Material Plane know them—are not necessary. Amduscias' spell-like powers are: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *fire shield* (either version), *detect invisibility*, *detect lie*, *read magic*, *locate object*, *dispel magic*, *telekinesis* (5,000 g.p. maximum weight), *find familiar* (for another being; the familiar will be an imp), and *faerie fire*. Amduscias can cause *fear* (save vs. spell to avoid) in anyone within 3" he points at (but only one target per round). Once per day he can use a *symbol of stunning*.

Amduscias is sometimes called the "Reconciliator of Foes," because he is a skillful actor and negotiator, and Tiamat often employs him to mediate in disputes between devils or her kin. While in any of his forms, Amduscias can speak and understand perfectly any language (cf. *tongues* spell). When encountered, Amduscias will only have treasure with him if he is in his human-like form; if so, it may be of any type. Amduscias regenerates 2 hit points per round. He can *summon* (with a 70% chance of success) 1-3 abishai at will.

MALPHAS (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -3

MOVE: 12"/30" (in crow form)

HIT DICE: 90 hit points

% IN LAIR: 20%

TREASURE TYPE: *See below*

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +5*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: +2 *or better weapon to hit*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: *See below*

PSIONIC ABILITY: 220

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Malphas is a duke in the service of Tiamat, ruler of Avernus. He leads 40 companies of abishai, and, like his fellow duke Amduscias and the pit fiend Goap, is likely to be found traveling about Avernus enforcing Tiamat's will. None of Tiamat's dukes have permanent encampments or fortresses, but instead they maintain a commonly held system of guarded, "safe" caves where their forces can rest or gather.

Malphas appears as a powerful, dark-complexioned man dressed in black velvet studded with gems (of considerable value; his robes have 333 gems of all sorts, 100 g.p. base value each, if recovered complete), or as a large, black, crow-like bird.

Malphas shuns armor, and fights with all weapons (and his spell-like powers) when in human form. His voice is deep and compelling, and with his powers of *tongues* and *ESP* (usable at will), he is adept at deceiving others, particularly non-devils. He may carry treasure of any type if encountered in human form.

Once per round, at will, Malphas can use one of his spell-like powers: *tongues* or *ESP* (as noted above), *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *fortress* (this creates a

structure similar to *Daern's Instant Fortress*—see the DMG—in all respects, save that its door will open and close for anyone, and it will disappear in 16 turns or when Malphas wills), *detect invisibility*, *read magic*, *dispel magic*, *flame arrow* (Malphas can also apply this to blades wielded by himself or others; these become *flame tongue* swords—fiery damage, but no "to hit" bonuses—for 3 rounds), and *remove* (or *bestow*) *curse*. Once per day Malphas can use a *symbol of pain*, and he can cause *fear* (save vs. spell at -2 to avoid) by touch (one target per round). He can *summon* 1-2 abishai, with a 55% chance of success, at will. Malphas regenerates 2 hit points per round.

NERGAL (Greater Devil)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 18"/10"

HIT DICE: 106 hit points

% IN LAIR: Nil

TREASURE TYPE: Nil

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 3-12

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: +2 *or better weapon to hit*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: *L (9' tall)*

PSIONIC ABILITY: 211

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Nergal is the most powerful of the "rabble of devilkin" banished to Avernus by the archdevils. Usually enveloped in magical *darkness*, Nergal appears as a lion-headed, winged toad. His mottled pinkish-gray, warty skin is covered with sores which ooze a clear, colorless ichor. This liquid is deadly poisonous to humans and demi-humans, who must save vs. poison to avoid this effect if contacted. If the save is successful,

the ichor does 1-6 points of corrosive damage and confers immunity to its effects upon the victim for 10-40 turns. Nergal is sometimes called "The Bringer of Pestilence and Fever" because of this property.

Nergal is warlike, quick to attack those who defy him, and will bully injured or weaker creatures. His bite does 3-12 points of damage, and possibly confers a disease; refer to the DMG for type and effects. Victims who are bitten must save vs. poison at +3 to avoid disease.

Nergal can employ the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *wall of fire*, *continual light*, *tongues*, *read magic*, *detect magic*, *detect invisibility*, *dispel magic*, and *darkness* 15' radius. He can cause *fear* (save vs. spell to avoid) by touch, if he so wills. Nergal regenerates 2 hit points per round. (Note that he cannot use a *symbol*, nor can he *summon* other devils to his aid.)

Nergal likes to present himself to human intruders as a fellow man horribly transformed by diabolic magic, and may "help" the intruders for a time, usually to learn of their powers, magic, treasure, and purposes, before luring them into a trap. Often he uses the powers and magic he obtains in this way to torment his victims; sometimes he hoards information and treasure he obtains to use it for bargaining purposes. Always, he builds and looks to the future, planning a forcible entry into the ranks of the dukes or archdevils. He has no fixed abode or lair, but often conceals caches of treasure or magic he has seized in caverns and grottos scattered all about Avernus.

BIST (Greater Devil)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 14"

HIT DICE: 90 hit points

% IN LAIR: Nil

TREASURE TYPE: Nil

NO. OF ATTACKS: 3

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-5/2-5/2-12

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 60%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (9' long)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 213

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Bist, a devil akin to the hellcats (see the *Fiend Folio Tome*: Hellcat), is totally selfish and a master of duplicity. For these reasons, she is mistrusted by all archdevils and is confined to Avernus. Bist cannot leave the hells without being summoned (unlike hellcats), for she has been compelled to change her name, and thus can no longer be summoned by mages on other planes. She shares many of the hellcats' other capabilities, however.

Invisible in the presence of light (except for her eyes, which appear as irises of orange flame floating in midair), Bist appears in darkness as a faintly luminescent, wraith-like, and unusually large hellcat. Her eyes retain their flame-like appearance when she is so revealed.

Bist is immune to all mind-controlling spells (*charm*, *hold*, *sleep*, etc.). She can only be hit by weapons of +2 "to hit" or better, and all magical weapons lose their damage bonuses when striking her. Bist communicates by *telepathy* in a 14" range, although she can speak (in a hissing, rasping voice) the common tongue, Mabrahoring (the High Tongue of the hells), and the lawful evil alignment tongue.

Bist can employ the following spell-like powers at will, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *affect normal fires*, *detect magic*, *detect invisibility*, *dispel magic*, *magic missile* (3 missiles per spell), and *shield*.

Once per day Bist can employ *gaze reflection*, and once per day she can *blink*. In addition, she can generate *fear* at will in a 5' radius sphere about herself. Bist regenerates 1 hit point per round.

CAIM (Greater Devil)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -1

MOVE: 8"/16"

HIT DICE: 93 hit points

% IN LAIR: Nil

TREASURE TYPE: Nil

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-12

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: +2 *or better weapon to hit*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: S (5' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 213

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Caim is an outcast devil, bound to Avernus. He is a gossip and a sneak, and is particularly disliked in the hells. A skilled orator, he can always make his own actions or opinions seem reasonable—and he often seeks to dupe intruders, partly because he considers the flesh of elves and men delicious.

Caim appears as a large, upright, darkly handsome bird—a thrush—with a long, sharp beak and a belt about the hips. In pouches on this belt Caim carries items he deems necessary, manipulating them by means of his *unseen servant* spell-like power.

Caim can employ the following spell-like powers at will, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *affect normal fires*, *unseen servant*, *light*, *detect magic*, *detect invisibility*, *dispel magic*, *hold person*, and *tongues*.

Once per day Caim can *reverse gravity*; thrice per day he can cast *repulsion*. Caim can generate *fear* in a 5' radius sphere about himself, at will. He regenerates 1 hit point every 2 rounds.

2. DIS

The second plane of the Nine Hells is largely flat, with here and there a bare hill or tor rising smoothly up out of the plains. Its sky is a thick, smoky-hued green without clouds, occasionally lit up by high lightning flickers and faint thunder. The black and cold waters of stagnant rivers and streams are stretched threadlike across the plain, radiating outward from the moat surrounding the city of Dis, which is the seat of the archdevil Dispater.

The city of Dis, built of unrusting iron, stands on an island in the center of a lake where the rivers meet. The waters are poisoned and give off odiferous vapors, sometimes visible as smoky wisps or plumes. Over the plains sweep ceaseless, fierce winds, tumbling many lemures helplessly through the air to strike repeatedly against the ground or each other. There is at least a 10% chance each round that a land-based traveler trying to stand or move against the wind will be swept off his or her feet (20% chance if mounted or standing high on an exposed position).

Aerial travelers will find the wind unpredictable and savage, so that unless they have spent years learning to maneuver in constantly changing winds, they suffer a Flight Class penalty of -1, and an aerial movement penalty of -3". (Those of Flight Class E retain the ability to fly, but lose a total of 6' move distance per round. Movement penalties in all cases should end when a creature is reduced to a maximum 2" move.)

Erinyes, being native to the plane, can navigate with comparative ease in the gale (suffering no penalties), and some of these devil-types are always aloft, buffeting lemures for sport and watching for intruders. Erinyes earn increased power on the plane of Dis through the favor of Dispater, who rewards them for unswerving loyalty (he often arranges tests or traps for his servants) and for missions diligently and well accomplished. When an erinyes encounters intruders in Dis, it will usually fly near to observe clearly their



numbers and appearance, and then head straight for Dis to inform the pit fiend Baalzephon, Dispater himself, one of Dispater's other commanders, or one of the "Iron Guard" (Dispater's bodyguard of malebranche).

Almost certainly the erinyes will encounter others of its kind while on this journey, and these it usually informs in passing of the intruders and their location, so that said intruders will likely suffer attacks from odd bands of erinyes before any organized force is sent out from the Iron City. If a group of erinyes encounters intruders, all but one—the messenger to Dis—will immediately attack. They may not seek to

slay the intruders outright, for Dispater, like all archdevils, is always alert for beings or items that can help maintain or improve his own position, and no erinyes deliberately courts his wrath by destroying something Dispater might have liked to have.

The Iron City itself is a dismal place of eyrie-riddled towers, zombies, garbage-choked streets alive with rot grubs (and a black pudding here and there), and iron-barred cells full of chains and torture implements. Abishai, imps, and spined devils, plus occasional barbed devils, hellcats, and rakshasa throng the dark, reeking streets.

The island on which the city is built rises sharply in elevation toward the center, and on this rocky knob is the “infernally grand” palace of Dispater, many towered and terrible. It is fashioned of stone (unlike the rest of the city) and furnished with iron, carved bone, and stone. Its terraced approaches are adorned with trees fashioned of iron. The palace is off limits to those without a reason for being there. Erinyes can be seen frequently flitting in and out of the palace’s high, arched windows (presumably to give or receive information). There are many caverns beneath the palace, known as “the pits of Dis,” where prisoners live in unmanacled savagery, fighting for the edible garbage that falls into their lightless realm down shafts from the palace above.

Far from the central city, the plains of Dis rise into rolling hills, haunted by “wild” erinyes who seldom or never go into the city, and by many hellcats. Pillars of stone are said to move about in the rolling hills of Dis, but nothing definite is known of these.

Hellcats serve various of the lesser devils, and can be found on all of the planes of the Nine Hells (except the ninth, for Asmodeus does not employ them and seldom tolerates the servants of others in his domain) from time to time, in accordance with their masters’ wishes. Most of the devils regard hellcats as sneaking spies and useful errand-runners, but untrustworthy due to their mutable loyalty, and of little consequence. Hellcats charged with guarding or the performance of other protective tasks will serve with zealous diligence, hoping to gain favor with their masters.

Between the city and the hills lie the vast estates held in fief by Dispater’s vassals. The duke Bitru is the strongest of these vassals; he can muster 70 companies of erinyes. *Merodach* (described below), commanding 21 companies of barbed devils, and the pit fiend *Furcas*, with 12 companies of bearded devils, also boast sizable holdings. Mephits, *achaierai*, and *rakshasas* wander these holdings, and *stench kows* and *spined devils* are the working backbone of them. *Rakshasas* sometimes achieve positions of

responsibility in a duke’s household or retinue, but are always watched closely, for they are too selfwilled and ambitious to be trusted servants.

In the city of Dis itself—and almost always within Dispater’s palace—can be found *Lilis*, Dispater’s consort; his prime minister, the pit fiend *Baalzephon*, who orders and administers Dispater’s vassals and armies; and *Biffant*, the provost, who runs and commands the staff of the palace itself. *Titivilus*, Dispater’s nuncio, can be found here, as can the pit fiend *Bel*, who commands the “Iron Guard” (3 companies of *malebranche*), and *Arioch*, Dispater’s avenger, who punishes all those who have wronged or hindered the will and plans of Dispater.

LILIS (Princess of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -1

MOVE: 14”/26”

HIT DICE: 66 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 85%

TREASURE TYPE: Q(x4), S

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +3*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 60%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (5’ tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 211

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Lilis, consort of Dispater, is one of the older and weaker female devils, but her careful diplomacy and strategies and her attention to events in the hells and elsewhere (her network of spies is said to be second only to that of Asmodeus) has kept her own position in the infernal regions as secure as that of any of the nobility of the hells. *Lilis* and *Biffant* (q.v.), Dispater’s provost, are

as trusting and as close as two devils ever become—but both are (thus far) unswervingly loyal to Dispater, making his control of Dis the envy of other archdevils.

Once per round, at will, *Lilis* can employ one of the following spell-like powers: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *animate dead*, *charm person*, *dispel magic*, *know alignment*, *detect lie*, *tongues*, *read magic*, *dimension door*, *repulsion*, *invisibility*, (fulfill another’s) *limited wish*. Once per day *Lilis* can *cause insanity* by touch. She can cause *fear* by pointing at a victim (one victim per round; saving throw vs. spell applicable). She can *summon* 1–3 erinyes (70% chance of success), and can regenerate 1 point of damage every turn.

Description: *Lilis* has orange-red skin, copper-colored hair and green eyes; she looks like a short, plump, well-preserved human female of middle age, except for the hue of her skin, her tiny orange-red horns, long red nails, forked tail, wings, and delicate cloven black hooves.

ARIOCH (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -4

MOVE: 14”/20”

HIT DICE: 123 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 65%

TREASURE TYPE: *See below*

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1–6 (bite), *by weapon type +6*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (9’ tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 226

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Arioch serves Dispater in the office of “avenger,” meting out punishment upon all on Dis who defy or

otherwise displease his master. He also wards off the intrusions of devils of all ranks from other planes, and accompanies his master as bodyguard in all situations of possible peril (such as visits to the court of Asmodeus or other planes). In combat, Arioch employs a huge, 20-foot-long, double-ended +1 *halberd* (having a blade at either end, and wielded by grasping in the middle of the shaft) of adamantite.

Arioch can use the following spell-like powers, one at a time, once per round: *produce flame*, *blink*, *dispel magic*, *detect invisibility*, *remove (or bestow) curse*, and *magic missile* (6 missiles per spell). Once per day Arioch can use a *symbol of death*. He radiates *fear* at will in a 6" radius (saving throw vs. spell to avoid). Arioch regenerates 2 hit points per round.

Description: Arioch's flat, reptilian head (rather like a stubby crocodile's) is ringed with a leonine mane. His skin is dark wine-red, deepening to purple on the head and shoulders, and on his great bat-like wings. Arioch has a forked tail, great cloven hooves, and heavily muscled arms.

BIFFANT (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -1

MOVE: 14"

HIT DICE: 84 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 90%

TREASURE TYPE: Q(x8), S

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +3*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (6' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 219

Attack/Defense modes: *All/all*

Biffant serves Dispat as provost, running the affairs of that archdevil's palace. Consequently, he is almost always to be found in the Iron City, usually in the palace itself, where he is never without a staff/guard of two "messenger" erinyes and six servant spined devils. Typically he carries an ornate iron rod (equal in damage potential to a morning star), but will seize whatever is at hand in a battle. Biffant prefers to let others fight for him, however, and will try to *summon* or otherwise call for aid if attacked. He is not particularly brave or forceful, but is crafty and plans far, far into the future. Biffant and Lilis (q.v.) are said to be very friendly; closer in mutual understanding and cooperation, some say, than Lilis and Dispat himself.

Once per round Biffant can use any one of the following spell-like powers: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *wall of fire*, *read magic*, *detect invisibility*, *detect magic*, *detect lie*, *know alignment*, *locate object*, *animate dead*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Once per day he can employ a *symbol of hopelessness*, or one of pain. Biffant radiates *fear* in a 3" radius at will. He is able to *summon* 1-6 spined devils (70% chance of success) or 1-2 erinyes (30% chance of success) when necessary. Biffant regenerates 1 hit point per round.

Description: Biffant appears as a portly, blood-red skinned humanoid devil, wingless but with a small, tufted tail and two inward-pointing, hook-curved horns that sprout from his head above either temple. His eyes are of a single hue, deep blue-green, and he is always smiling.

MERODACH (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 14"/12"

HIT DICE: 92 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 50%

TREASURE TYPE: G, P

NO. OF ATTACKS: *See below*

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *See below*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (12' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 196

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Merodach is a duke in the service of Dispat, and leads 21 companies of barbed devils into battle on his master's behalf. Merodach has the body of a wolf, large, feathered wings, and a prehensile, serpentine tail. Atop Merodach's head are two huge, spreading longhorns, and these he can turn slightly to strike an opponent. A clumsy flyer (Flight Class D), he prefers to run on all fours, but in battle often rears up to wield a weapon with his front claws. He has no special or magical weapons, but favors polearms of all sorts. In a fight his jaws do 1-10 damage, his claws 1-4 and 1-4 (or one attack with a weapon, damage as per weapon type +5), and his horns 2-12 each. Merodach's tail does no damage in combat, but is used to trip, blind, and disarm opponents, or to carry weapons for Merodach's use later.

At will Merodach can use the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *animate dead*, *detect invisibility*, *know alignment*, *telekinesis* (5,000 g.p. weight limit), *read magic*, *teleport*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*.

Once per day, Merodach can employ a *symbol of pain*. He is able to cause *fear* by touch (save vs. spell to avoid). He can *summon* 1-2 barbed devils with a 50% chance of success. Merodach regenerates 2 hit points per round.

ALOCER (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 12"

HIT DICE: 90 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 50%

TREASURE TYPE: G, P

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *Bite 2-8, by weapon type +4*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (7' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 196

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Alocer is a duke in the service of Dispat, and leads 36 companies of erinyes into battle. Warlike in attitude, Alocer wears plate mail and fights with broadsword, axe, mace, and dagger, wielding one at a time and biting at the same time with his great jaws. He will seize and employ other weapons (incurring no non-proficiency penalties) available when in battle, and often rides a nightmare about his estates or to war.

Alocer has a humanoid body with red-gold flesh and a fearsome leonine head. The fiery flash of his eyes can be seen for some distance; if one meets their gaze, the victim must save vs. spells or be *blinded* for 2-12 days (devils are immune to this power). A *cure blindness* or *dispel magic* spell will restore sight to a victim.

Once per round, Alocer can employ one of the following spell-like powers: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *detect magic*, *detect invisibility*, *fly* (enabling him to act as an erinyes in terms of flight class and move), *dispel magic*, *dancing lights*, and *read magic*. Alocer can cause *fear* by touch (save vs. spell at -3 to avoid). Once per

day he can use a *symbol of stunning* or one of *discord*.

Alocer can *summon* 1-2 erinyes with a 65% chance of success. He regenerates 2 hit points per round.

3. MINAUROS

The third plane of the Nine Hells is ruled by Mammon, the clutching "Lord of Avarice," and nothing of value exists for long on this plane before being destroyed or taken inside the walls of his many-pillared fortress. This nameless abode is built of black stone brought from another plane (possibly the Prime Material), and stands crazily upon great pillars that sink constantly, slowly, into the bottomless ooze of the marsh.

The outlands of Minauros form one great dismal marsh of stinking, rotting earth, covered with carrion and some inches of water. It is a place of eternal rain; dirty water mixed with hail falls ceaselessly, at a steady pace, from the murky, fog-shrouded air. The bodies of a great many creatures lie here; indeed, it is said elsewhere in the hells that Mammon's house is built upon them.

Disease (*DMG*, pp. 13-15) is rampant here; the base chance of a creature not native to the hells contracting a disease here is 13% per trip (including the modifiers for polluted water, etc.—but note that this base chance is doubled if a creature imbibes any of the water on the ground of Minauros, deliberately or inadvertently). Bones and the like are always handy for use as weapons—but their "handiness" also obstructs movement, causing constant stumbling and occasional falls for those who travel overland. A fall may do serious damage if the victim strikes an upthrust bone, or is knocked unconscious, perchance to drown.

The fortress of Mammon is the only building of any sort on Minauros; in the marshes, Mammon allows stone to be used only in "cells." These are great shallow pits (two or three feet deep in water) in which one or more great stones lie. Fastened to the stones at one end, and dangling away from them, are great

chains and manacles of iron or brass. The vigilant barbed devils will capture any intruders and bring them hence, where they sit or stand chained in the cold, fetid water until they die, are taken away for interrogation or torture, or escape. Sometimes when Mammon or his lieutenants are occupied elsewhere, the barbed devils will let a prisoner "escape" and then hunt it for cruel sport. What they cannot capture they kill, or else call on Focalor, the pit fiend Zimimar, or Mammon himself to deal with.

Typically, barbed devils perch atop the stone of a cell, burning the heads and exposed portions of the prisoners below. Prisoners soon learn (if they survive that long) to sit tight against the rock so that they can use it for protection and support, to elevate themselves out of the water by sitting on a pile of bones, and to keep their heads above water even when sleep comes. Barbed devils can control the intensity and size of their *produce flame* ability with great accuracy. The ground water of Minauros will douse such a flame, but the resultant scalding steam can also do considerable damage to the unprotected. (Barbed devils are not harmed by the steam.)

Toward the center of the plane, Minauros rises into a vast tortured volcanic badlands of ash-hills and slime-filled rifts. The palace of Mammon sits in a marshy bowl at the heart of these volcanic lands, where many rifts meet. It is here where Mammon's seneschal, *Focalor*, stands guard over Glasya (Mammon's consort), Mammon's palace, and Mammon's affairs when his master is out hunting across the badlands. The pit fiend Zimimar commands the "palace guard" of 6 companies of bone devils, and will either be found at the palace or hurrying elsewhere to protect Mammon or enforce his will.

The vassal dukes of Mammon rule stretches of volcanic ridges and ash-choked, lifeless woods far from the central palace, between the uplands and the marshes where prisoners lie in dolor. Chief among these vassal dukes is Bael, who can gather 66 companies of barbed devils (and actively plots to

supplant Focalor, and ultimately Mammon himself). The duke *Caarcrinolaas* commands 36 companies of barbed devils, and although he is aware of Bael's ambitions, neither supports nor betrays them. The duke *Melchon*, who can muster only 18 companies of erinyes, chooses to be eagerly and actively loyal to Mammon—which has earned him the deep suspicion of the seneschal Focalor.

FOCALOR (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -3

MOVE.: 12"/16"

HIT DICE: 121 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 80%

TREASURE TYPE: F, I, Q (x3)

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-6, or by weapon type +4

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (6' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 223

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Focalor is seneschal (an agent, or bailiff) to Mammon, and wields much of the real power in Minauros, for his master is somewhat neglectful of security and diplomacy. The thin, often silent Focalor is careful in word and deed, and a master strategist. He is respectful, too, and takes no risks with the safety of Glasya (Mammon's consort) and that of the palace itself. Most of the other archdevils (and the outcast *Nergal*; see *Avernus* section) believe that Mammon would be easy prey were it not for the strength of his few dukes, and for the wise care of Focalor. Focalor's loyalty seems unshakeable; most of the archdevils have in the past tested it, and they continue to do so.



Focalor can employ the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *invisibility*, *detect invisibility*, *detect magic*, *read magic*, *tongues*, *dispel magic*, *gust of wind*, *water breathing*, *teleport*, *know alignment*, *passwall*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*.

Twice per day Focalor can *blink*, once per day he can cause *blindness* by touch, and four times a day he can *remove* (or *bestow*) *curse*. He can use a *symbol of stunning* once per day, and he can *summon* 1-2 barbed devils (40% chance) or 1-4 erinyes (65% chance) at will. Focalor causes *fear* by his breath, a cone of foul-smelling vapor 1" in range, spreading from a mouth-sized base to a 3'-wide spray. He can direct this at any target(s) in the area of effect, one exhalation per round (save vs. spell at -1 to avoid). Focalor regenerates 1 hit point per round.

Description: Focalor appears human—a thin, bearded, and middle-aged statesman or sage with power and heavy concerns—until he unfurls his feathered wings from his flowing robes or reveals his brown cloven hooves. Focalor wears an iron gauntlet on his right hand, as his badge of office, and with this gauntlet he can strike for 1-6 damage. He is normally armed with a staff, but will seize any weapons in battle. His skin is a pale pink-green, and if his armpits and flanks are revealed, tiny scales will be seen.

When summoned to the Prime Material Plane, Focalor will seize any chance to swim (for this he enjoys), and revels in the use of two powers of his that are ineffective in the hells: *fish command* (as in the *trident of fish command*, DMG p. 155; all fish save at +1), and *call storms* (usable only when at sea), basically a combination of call lightning and control winds. The

call storms ability, when employed, evokes lightning discharges from any clouds present, bringing also rain and strong winds in the direction and intensity Focalor wills, the whole effect lasting 4 turns. If no clouds are present, this power attracts them (which may take several hours, or a day or more). When they arrive, Focalor (if still present) can use the call storms ability again, as described above, to bring the storm out of the “summoned” clouds.

CAARCRINOLAAS (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -3

MOVE: 14”/12”

HIT DICE: 104 hit points

% IN LAIR: 55%

TREASURE TYPE: G, P

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +6*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (7 ½’ tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 203

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Caarcrinolaas is a duke in the service of Mammon, and leads 36 companies of barbed devils into combat at his master’s behest. In battle he wields a +3 scythe that does 5-11 (2-8 +3) damage vs. targets of any size, and wears armor with a high-spined collar to protect his head (for he wears no helm). He is indifferent to the ambitions of others, preferring to follow orders and wait for any opportunity to better himself to come along. Let others risk their necks in intrigues; Caarcrinolaas will sit and watch patiently.

He can use the following spell-like powers at will, once per round and one at a time: *pyrotechnics, produce*

flame, detect invisibility, detect magic, read magic, dispel magic, animate dead, teleport, invisibility, fire shield (either version), and (fulfill another’s limited) wish.

Once per day Caarcrinolaas can cast a *death spell*, and twice per day he can petrify one creature by touch (as in *flesh to stone*; normal saving throw allowed). Once per day he can use a *symbol of pain*, and he causes *fear* by touch if he so wills. He can *summon* 1-3 barbed devils with a 65% chance of success. He regenerates 1 hit point per round.

Description: Caarcrinolaas is a gray/brown-furred, dog-headed humanoid with scarlet bat-like wings, upright scarlet horns protruding from a bony brow-ridge above each temple, black hooves, and a scarlet, forked tail. In the center of his brow is a third horn. Taller than the two up-curved flanking horns, it protrudes straight up, and can be employed (3-6 thrusting damage) against any targets directly above Caarcrinolaas (a rare circumstance). He has strong, bony, scarred hands of human appearance, and glittering yellow eyes.

MELCHON (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 13”

HIT DICE: 101 hit points

% IN LAIR: 55%

TREASURE TYPE: G, P

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE ATTACK: *By weapon type +5*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (6’ tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 189

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Melchon is a duke in the service of Mammon, on whose behalf he leads 18 companies of erinyes in battle. A devil most jealous of his stronger fellows, Melchon is something of a malcontent in Minauros, and would welcome any setback to Bael or Focalor—but he masks his true feelings.

Melchon can employ any one of the following spell-like powers in a round, one at a time: *pyrotechnics, produce flame, envenom* (which turns water—of any sort except holy water—to a caustic, viscous venom used by erinyes and Melchon himself upon their weapons), *detect invisibility, detect magic, read magic, dispel magic, teleport, and suggestion.*

Twice per day Melchon can cast a *delayed blast fireball* of 6d6 damage, and once per day he can use a *symbol of hopelessness*. Melchon causes *fear* in all creatures within 1” of any living being he strikes, including the target struck; all must save vs. spell (the target at -2) to avoid). Melchon can *summon* 1-3 erinyes (70% chance) whenever desired. He regenerates 2 hit points of damage every round.

Description: Melchon is a fiery red-skinned, humanoid devil with upturned, bull-like horns; black, curling brows and beard; black hooves; and large, crimson wings. In battle he strikes with his weapons—usually a trident or a great two-handed war axe (12’ long, damage 3-12 vs. S/M, 3-18 vs. L).

His weaponry may vary, but Melchon’s weapons are never magical, and they are always envenomed (see *Monster Manual*, Erinyes, for effects of the venom). Melchon also makes use of his long, agile forked tail, which ends in a sharp sting. This sting does 2-8 points of stabbing damage, and Melchon usually envenoms it prior to any expected combat. Melchon is immune to the effects of his, and other devils’, caustic venom. Melchon’s venom does not dry out in the hells (although usage does wear it off of a weapon), but it is harmless outside the infernal regions unless it is continually within 1” of a devil (an erinyes, or Melchon himself).

4. PHLEGETHOS

The fourth plane of the Nine Hells is ruled by Belial. It is a tortured realm of volcanoes, gouting fires, hills of ash, and pits of smoking dung. The ground is always uncomfortably hot—most intruders are constantly on the move—and well patrolled by groups of barbed devils. Ground tremors are common, and a sudden, violent eruption or the opening of a fissure in the earth is not unusual. The sky is a dark, starless void, but the landscape is weirdly lit by leaping flames all about. There are rivers of liquid fire, and at least two large lakes (all the bodies of liquid are interconnected), and there the flames blaze brightest.

This “water” is home to several wandering salamanders that were brought here long ago, to be bound in servitude to Belial. This didn’t work out—salamanders take orders from no creature when it does not suit them—and most of the salamanders were immediately slain by Belial’s servants and vassals. But a few escaped, yet bound to this plane by Belial’s magic, and survive by avoiding large groups of devils and snatching lone creatures who venture too near to one of the rivers of fire.

These salamanders grow fewer as, one by one, they are found and slain—but the devils are busy, and the salamanders can leave the rivers without any harm and venture elsewhere on Phlegethos, so they have lots of places to hide. Their favorite hiding spots are long, worm-like volcanic “tubes” in rock, and they are fond of burrowing into a hill of ash until it collapses overhead to conceal the burrower.

This plane is perhaps the most visited of the Nine Hells except for Avernus, since outsiders who work magic often come to the fabled “firefalls” of Phlegethos, where the rivers of fire tumble from volcanic ridges down into clefts. The fire in such a spot is mentioned by many alchemists and mages skilled in the creation of magic items. The best *flame tongue* swords (DMG, p. 165) are made in such places; one account of the making of a *helm of brilliance* mentions



one such site, and the barbed devils themselves seem attracted to such falls of flame, leaping and playing about the firefalls and employing their *produce flame* powers as if excited.

Belial rules from the huge, hollowed-out shell of a dead volcano. His stronghold is known as Abriymoch, “The Mount of Leaping Flames.” The archdevil is attended by his consort *Naome*, his legate *Chamo*, and a few malebranche (notable among them the great scarred specimen known as “Night Fang”) under the command of the pit fiend *Zapan*.

Abriymoch consists of several tiers of chambers, opening into the central shaft like balconies, and

connected to each other by stairs, shafts, and a great spiral path that winds about the central gulf or shaft of the dead volcano. Some chambers stretch through the sloping walls of the volcano and have windows or doors opening out onto the volcano’s outside flanks. The lips of the volcanic crater are crowned by Abriymoch’s basalt towers. A few erinyes under the command of the pit fiend *Zaebo*s, Belial’s lieutenant, serve as messengers within Abriymoch and between it and vassal dukes or outlying patrols. These erinyes are often bullied and are quite miserable, and as usual have their eyes always on bettering their own positions in the hells. *Chamo* suspects that the

erinyes have served as the spies of Asmodeus, Baalzebul, and perhaps other archdevils in the past, but he has not yet been able to prove anything.

Abriymoch is staffed by spined and bearded devils, and has a kennel of hell hounds that can be used by Zapan's forces to help defend and guard the palace.

The vast, smoking plains surrounding the volcanic heart of Phlegethos are the domain of Belial's vassals: *Balan*, who commands 40 companies of bearded devils; *Bathym*, who can muster 30 companies of barbed devils; and *Gaziel*, who leads 11 companies of bone devils. These vassals are usually dealt with and commanded by Zaebo, speaking for his master Belial, who, assisted by Chamo, is usually occupied with matters of diplomacy and intrigue within the Nine Hells.

Phlegethos is the most chaotic physical environment in the Nine Hells, affording intruders the most opportunities for concealment—but it is also one of the most active planes, being constantly traveled by its inhabitants. The archdevils of other planes often test underlings by sending them here, charged with accomplishing a task and remaining undetected by the patrols that roam Phlegethos, while their progress is observed by spies—of whom there are many among the barbed devils.

As with Minauros, the outlands of Phlegethos are wetter and lower than the interior, and these “reek-ing fens” are populated by bearded devils, a few styx devils and abishai, hell hounds, lemures, and the mephits who flit about constantly everywhere on Phlegethos, serving as “eyes” for any and all who reward them.

NAOME (Princess of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 16"/26"

HIT DICE: 69 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 85%

TREASURE TYPE: P, S, T

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +5*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (6' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 219

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Naome is consort to Belial, the ruler of Phlegethos. She spends much of her time in Abriymoch, but is highly regarded in the hells for her settling of disputes when others have failed, and her shrewd bargaining ability. In battle she uses her spells and a long scimitar; although she rarely engages in combat, it is said she enjoys a good fight.

Naome can employ the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round, at will: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *charm person*, *dispel magic*, *know alignment*, *detect invisible*, *read magic*, *telekinesis*, (2,000 g.p. weight limit), *suggestion*, *teleport*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Once per day Naome can cast a *feeble-mind* (normal saving throw applies) on one creature. Her gaze can, if she so wills, cause *fear* (save vs. spell to avoid). She can *summon* 1–4 barbed devils (65% chance of success), and regenerates 2 points of damage every turn.

Description: Naome is a short, burly, middle-aged female devil, with long brown hair and cold, pale blue-green eyes. She has a tinkling laugh and a surprisingly light, easy sense of humor. Quick-witted and glib-tongued, she rarely makes enemies (although she bears no love for Glasya, the consort of Mammon, or Lilith, the consort of Moloch), and is most friendly with Baftis, the consort of Baalzebul. When clad in flowing robes (she prefers green or claret-colored silken garments), only her tiny horns, gray hooves, and crimson forked tail betray her diabolic nature. Her face, shoulders, and hands have a pale,

human-like complexion, but the rest of her body is deep crimson in color. Her hands have long red nails.

CHAMO (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -1

MOVE: 14"/16"

HIT DICE: 131 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 85%

TREASURE TYPE: C, P, S

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE ATTACK: *By weapon type +4*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (6' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 222

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Chamo serves Belial as legate, and plans one day to supplant his master. He fears Naome more than Belial, for Chamo and she too often think alike to suit him. Polite but abrupt, Chamo always appears calm and fearless. He is said to know every hiding place in Phlegethos, and possesses an iron-shod staff capped with the linked (by rings of beaten brass) skulls of sixteen paladins defeated by him over the years. This staff is +1, parts or negates all *web* spells, *wizard lock* spells, *hold* spells, and other locks or bindings at a touch, and it can *detect good*; the skulls upon its top glow with a pearly white radiance when a creature of good alignment is within 9".

Chamo can employ the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *wall of fire*, *wall of smoke* (equals *wall of fog*), *fireball* (4d6), *charm person*, *dispel magic*, *read magic*, *tongues*, *detect invisibility*, *invisibility*, *teleport*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*.

Twice per day Chamo can *reverse gravity* (for as long as desired, or until his concentration is broken by events or attack), and once per day he can *petrify* (*flesh to stone* of permanent duration) one creature, by touch. He causes *fear* by his stare (save vs. spell to avoid), and can employ a *symbol of stunning* once per day. Chamo can *summon* 1-6 bearded devils (45% chance of success) at will.

Description: Chamo appears as a white-haired, middle-aged man with big brown eyes. He has upward-pointing horns, black hooves, a forked tail, and black bat-like wings. His skin is scarlet, darkening to blue on his long-nailed hands. He usually wears loose robes of black with a high stand-up collar.

BALAN (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -3

MOVE: 12"

HIT DICE: 112 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 55%

TREASURE TYPE: C, P

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +6*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (9' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 219

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Balan is a duke in the service of Belial, and leads 40 companies of bearded devils into combat. Like his soldiers, he is cruel and aggressive, given to wild, lustful rages and violent sport. Little liked even among his fellows on Phlegethos, Balan is at the most respected, and at the least tolerated. He will never back down

from a fight, although he is shrewd enough not to be drawn into conflict with superior foes, given any choice in the matter. In battle he fights with his spined limbs and a weapon, favoring large axes, blades, or halberds (but he has no special or magical arms). Balan is belligerent, roaring, and loves a rough-and-tumble fight with opponents he considers weaker than himself.

Along his forearms from his elbows to the backs of his hands run rows of spines six to eight inches in length. These spines pierce and rake for 2-4 points of damage per arm per attack, and a struck opponent must save vs. poison or immediately develop a burning rash which reduces Dexterity by 1 point per round for six rounds after the attack. Subsequent poison attacks on the same target will not hasten the loss of Dexterity points, and a 6-point loss is the most that can be suffered. Recovery of lost Dexterity points begins, at the rate of 2 points per round, on the round after the victim reaches the maximum penalty of -6. Any poison strikes suffered by a victim during the recovery period will drive the victim back toward the maximum Dexterity loss of 6 points, counteracting points gained back up to that time and delaying further recovery.

Once per round, Balan can use one of the following spell-like powers: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *animate dead*, *detect invisibility*, *dispel magic*, *invisibility*, *teleport*, *wall of fire*, *push*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Balan causes *fear* with his roar (save vs. spell at -1 to avoid) in all creatures within 2". Once per day he can use a *symbol of pain*. He can also *summon* 1-4 bearded devils with a 50% chance of success. Balan regenerates 2 hit points per round.

Description: Balan appears as a giant, yellow-skinned man with fierce black brows and a beard which grows in tufts (somewhat resembling the lower barbels of a catfish). He has gray hooves and a body which darkens to scarlet about his legs and his forked tail. He typically wears a leather weapon belt and

girdle, but shuns armor. He has red, flaming eyes visible at some distance, and a hoarse voice. He is quite a wit (despite a coarse sense of humor), although few converse long enough on friendly terms with him to discover this. He wears a badge upon his belt depicting his own head next to a bull's head (signifying his brutal, aggressive nature) and a ram's head (denoting the lusty side of his nature). Balan is polite and respectful to Naome, his master's consort, but other she-devils will rarely tolerate his presence.

BATHYM (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 14"

HIT DICE: 102 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 55%

TREASURE TYPE: C, P

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-8 *or by weapon type +5*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (6' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 221

Attack/Defense modes: *All/all*

Bathym is a duke in the service of Belial, and leads 30 companies of barbed devils. He is sometimes called "The Black Duke," after his custom of wearing jet black armor (with full helm) and a black cloak. In battle Bathym wields a black +3 mace which dispels *light*, *continual light*, and *faerie fire* radiances upon contact with the affected area, and causes *dancing lights* to fade away. Bathym is also armed with a long-bladed, envenomed knife (treat as a dagger of venom), and his spell-like abilities. He rides a nightmare into

battle. If summoned or bargained with, he will reveal (for a high price) knowledge of the magical lore of gemstones, herbal lore, and low-level magic-user spells (material components, casting, and general principles).

Once per round, Bathym can, at will, use one of the following spell-like powers: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *read magic*, *tongues*, *detect invisibility*, *wall of fire*, *blink*, *teleport*, *ESP*, *confusion*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Once per day he can cast *feeblemind*, and thrice per day he can use a 4-dice *delayed blast fireball*. Once per day Bathym can use a *symbol of sleep* (19 levels or hit dice or 99 hit points affected; saving throw indicates only nodding and dozing with a 1 in 20 chance per round of awakening fully, and automatic arousal if attacked). He causes *fear* by pointing at a target (one creature only per round, effective only within 5" range; save vs. spell to avoid). At will Bathym can summon 1-3 barbed devils (60% chance of success). Bathym regenerates 1 hit point every 2 rounds.

Description: Bathym dresses in black, and has black-hued eyes, black hooves, and black nails. His skin, horns and tail are a dead, fishbelly-white color. Bathym's forked tail is short and curled like a pig's; he is most sensitive about it and keeps it concealed. When angry, Bathym hisses like a snake when he speaks.

GAZIEL (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 16"

HIT DICE: 116 hit points

% IN LAIR: 55%

TREASURE TYPE: P, S

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 3-12, or by weapon type +5

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (12' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 196

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Gaziel is a duke in the service of Belial, and leads 11 companies of bone devils into battle when called upon by his master. He does nothing he does not have to do, and appears to spend much of his time brooding. In battle, Gaziel is cold and mechanical—a perfect general, never missing or forgetting any aspect of a skirmish or possible tactic. On rare occasions he appears to take some personal interest in such a fight, whereupon he becomes most savage. He fights by spitting acid up to 2" with his forked tongue (3-12 corrosive damage, will eat through metal, hide or cloth), and with whatever weapons are at hand.

Once per round Gaziel can use any one of the following spell-like powers: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *hold person*, *hold monster*, *read magic*, *know alignment*, *detect invisibility*, *burning hands* (doing 14 hit points of damage), *fly*, *teleport*, *dispel magic*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Once per day he can *slay living* (one creature, by touch), and twice per day he can *paralyze* a victim within 4" by pointing at the character or creature (save vs. paralyzation to avoid). Once per day he can use a *symbol of hopelessness*. Gaziel radiates *fear* in a 2" radius at will. He can *summon* 1-3 bone devils with a 60% chance of success. Gaziel regenerates 1 hit point every 2 rounds.

Description: Gaziel has a white, skull-like head with hollow eye sockets and small, curling pink horns, so that from a distance he resembles a bone devil. He has a brown to blood-red hued humanoid body, a red forked tail, and black hooves. His tongue is long, slim, purple-red, and forked. His wrists and knees have bulbous, bony joints, and his elbows have hooked spurs (1-6 gash damage).

5. STYGIA

The fifth plane of the Nine Hells derives its name from the Styx, the mighty river of black, opaque water that falls from the endless encircling mountains and swells into a vast salt swamp that fills much of the plane. Stygia is ruled by Geryon from his huge castle, Tantlin, which lies at the center of the plane, the swamp curving about it for slightly less than half the run of its high stone walls. Stygia is a chilly place, lit by lightning flashes and "cold fires" (weird white flames that are freezing cold and do 2-12 points of damage per round of contact) that burn on rocky peaks for some time after a lightning strike. It is not known precisely what these flames feed on—they appear to blaze on bare rock—and they leave no trace on rock or ice. Much of Stygia's landscape is high, tumbled rock and ice. Avalanches and electrical storms are common, and "shooting stars" of ice sometimes hurtle across the sky from the peaks, smoking, to plunge into the swamp far below.

The swamp itself is constantly disturbed by splashes and wails, for it is the abode of the styx devils, who torment lemures constantly unless summoned by Geryon to undertake a mission. Sometimes a bone devil or horned devil will enter the swamp to join in the fun, or to chase a few styx devils, but on such occasions all of the styx devils present will eventually unite to drive them out.

Beneath the swamp lies a cold and lightless ocean, home to giant octopi and squids, whales, and many smaller, blind fish. There are no sharks or killer whales, however, for in the utter depths Sekolah, a great white shark, cruises. She long ago devoured all potential rivals, and now swims supreme, ignored by the devils, as the ruler of her deep realm. If there ever was an aquatic race of any sort at the bottom of this black river—sahuagin, diabolic, or otherwise—there is none now. The sahuagin of the Prime Material Plane worship Sekolah (see the DDG book) but she appears totally disinterested in all matters except where her



next meal is coming from. Much of the upper reaches of the ocean are always frozen (if they were not, much of the vegetation that makes up the swamp would have sunk to the ocean floor long ago), and Sekolah very rarely comes to the surface. When she does, lemures, hell hounds, and devils alike usually make a hasty exit from the surrounding area.

Geryon seldom leaves his great castle. He delights in physically battling lesser devils and captured intruders within the walls of Tantlin, sometimes chasing them for long periods of time throughout the halls of the castle and the gravel-strewn mines nearby, where Tantlin's blocks were and still are quarried, eternally, by captives, spined and barbed devils, and

the like. Geryon delights in luring powerful creatures from other planes (that is, from outside the hells) to Stygia with carefully contrived tales of magic, lore, or other treasure, so that they can be the victims for one of his cruel hunts. Any survivors of these unsporting events go to the quarries. (Geryon, by the way, is immune to the strength-sapping power of the bone devils' tail poison.)

One of the most powerful members of Geryon's retinue is *Herodias*, whose title is magistrate. Herodias is responsible for the security of the realm and the training and ordering of Geryon's legions of bone devils, and for assuming command of the defenses of Tantlin whenever Geryon is hunting.

Geryon's bailiff, *Gorson*, concentrates on external matters. It is Gorson who observes the day-to-day activities and internal politics of the other planes of the Nine Hells, and who (unless Geryon steps in to do this directly) orders and coordinates the styx devils in their individual missions about the planes.

Geryon is perhaps the most satisfied or contented of the archdevils, and the least interested in the endless political struggle among the devils for more power, although he never misses a chance to act to the detriment of his foe Moloch, ruler of the sixth plane, or his other neighbor, Belial. Herodias and Gorson safeguard his interests (under the watchful eye of *Cozbi*, Geryon's consort), gaining much actual power while always acting in Geryon's name, and allowing Geryon to continue his "hunts" by, if not increasing his force and influence, at least preventing their erosion.

Newcomers to Stygia will find that it is cold (why the swamp and the river Styx do not freeze is a mystery to one accustomed to conditions on the Prime Material Plane), with little shelter outside Tantlin, and there is nothing to eat unless one has a taste for the flesh of devils, lemures or hell hounds. (It is not certain if such flesh is edible by humans. Some mad adventurers in the Realms have boasted of eating the flesh of devils, but the truth of their claims is unknown. If their words are true, it is impossible to say if such food is poisonous to some, carries any diseases or parasites, or if it in fact has caused their mental conditions.) Tantlin, however, is said to be richly provisioned and furnished, crammed with the bric-a-brac of centuries of plundering the wealth of other planes. (Before he gained the rulership of his own plane, Geryon was wont to undertake extended pillaging expeditions through the Prime Material Plane whenever summoned there by a foolish mortal—and he always sought out the most dangerous, and richest, foes.)

Geryon's vassals are outwardly loyal, and are often called upon to protect their master's interests. They include Amon, who commands 40 companies of bone

devils; *Agares*, who commands 31 companies of bone devils; *Machalas*, who leads 11 companies of barbed devils; and the pit fiend *Fecor*, who leads 8 companies of malebranche.

The fiefs of these dukes lie between Tantlin itself and the rockiest heights of the endless, frozen mountains, consisting of rising land and many long, twisting rocky canyons and hanging valleys. There are a few remote volcanic rifts in the mountains, commonly known as “steam trenches,” where the malebranche dwell unless ordered elsewhere.

COZBI (Princess of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -1

MOVE: 14”/24”

HIT DICE: 67 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 90%

TREASURE TYPE: C, E

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +4*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (7’ tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 229

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Cozbi is consort to Geryon, ruler of the fifth plane of the Nine Hells, and is perhaps the quietest and least forceful of the diabolic princesses—but she is no easy mark. Cozbi watches her master’s interests carefully at all times, for she knows well the hatred that both Moloch and Belial hold for Geryon, and she is aware of Geryon’s relative weakness among the archdevils. She mistrusts both Herodias and Gorson, and is said by some to be friendly with the outcast devil *Nergal* (see *Avernus* section). In battle, Cozbi throws

poisoned knives (Insinuating Type D; DMG, p. 20), and fights with a +1 spear.

Cozbi can employ the following spell-like powers, using them one at a time and one per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *animate dead*, *detect invisibility*, *charm monster*, *charm person*, *suggestion*, *dispel magic*, *know alignment*, *invisibility*, *polymorph self*, *read magic*, *ice storm*, *teleport*, and (fulfill another’s limited) wish. Four times per day she can cast a 4-dice lightning bolt, and once per day she can employ a *finger of death*. She causes *fear* by speaking to an individual (save vs. spell to avoid). She can *summon* (40% chance) 1-2 styx devils or, if she chooses, 1-4 bone devils (70% chance of success). Cozbi regenerates 2 points of damage every turn.

Description: Cozbi appears as a beautiful, unnaturally tall woman with chalk-white skin and long (thigh-length) pale green hair. Her eyes are fiery green and her long nails are black. She wears belted robes and jewelry when in Tantlin, but when fighting or otherwise active strips her garments away, whereupon her diabolic nature is revealed. Her hooves are tiny and delicate, easily concealed by boots, and Cozbi customarily wraps her forked tail about her waist, or hangs it over one arm. Her skin is shaded pink to red on her belly, and red from the hips down, but her arms and upper torso are chalk-white. Her hair usually hides two tiny horns that form a crescent upon the crown of her head, and her canine teeth are slim, vampire-like fangs (1-2 points of biting damage, but in a serious fight Cozbi will rarely let an opponent get close enough to allow her to employ this bite).

GORSON (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 14”

HIT DICE: 126 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 55%

TREASURE TYPE: A, G, P

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +7*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (6’ tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 231

Attack/Defense modes: *All/all*

Gorson is Geryon’s bailiff, and in this capacity is up to his neck in the intrigues and activities of the hierarchy of the hells. A quiet, careful devil who says nothing he does not intend to, and plans ever for the future, Gorson is acutely aware of Geryon’s relative weakness in comparison to the other archdevils. As a result, he always acts to strengthen the standing of “The Great Beast,” but in such a way as to make Gorson himself appear useful, reasonable, and non-committal to diabolic observers—future masters or allies—outside of Stygia. He will be quick to deal with intruders to Stygia, but will seek to keep any items seized or any knowledge gained about intruders from others as much as possible.

Gorson can employ the following spell-like powers, one at a time, and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *ice storm*, *animate dead*, *dispel magic*, *detect invisibility*, *polymorph self*, *invisibility*, *read magic*, *friends*, *hold person*, *teleport*, and (fulfill another’s limited) wish. Gorson causes *fear* by pointing at a target (one creature per round) within 6” range, and can use a *symbol of stunning* once per day. He can *summon* 1 styx devil (25% chance), 1-3 bone devils (60% chance), or 1-2 barbed devils (65% chance). Gorson regenerates 1 hit point per round.

Description: Gorson appears as a yellow-skinned, hawk-nosed man with black-hued eyes, small horns, a tufted lion-like tail, and black hooves. He wears saffron robes and bears a scimitar. His voice is soft and cultured; his advice and arguments always appear sound,

sensible, and convincing. In battle, Gorson appears to let out all of his pent-up feelings and go berserk, exulting in the rough-and-tumble. This is the origin of a saying in the hells, referring to someone hurrying, that the individual looks like "Gorson unleashed."

HERODIAS (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 18"

HIT DICE: 129 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 60%

TREASURE TYPE: A, S, G, P

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 3-12/3-12, *or by weapon type +7*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (8' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 236

Attack/Defense modes: *All/all*

Herodias serves Geryon as magistrate, and is a devil of great pride and ambition. He fully expects to one day be master of the Nine Hells, and favors any change in the present regime as a step in his inexorable rise to the top.

Herodias can employ the following powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics, produce flame, ice storm, wall of ice, animate dead, dimension door, dispel magic, detect magic, detect invisibility, polymorph self, read magic, suggestion, charm person, hold monster, hold person, teleport*, and (fulfill another's limited) wish. Herodias causes *fear* by touch (save vs. spell at -2 to avoid). Once per day he can *disintegrate* one creature or item of up to twice his own size, and twice per day he can cast *feeblemind*. Once per day he can employ a *symbol of hopelessness*. He can *summon* 1-4 bone devils

with a 60% chance of success. Herodias is able to regenerate 2 hit points per round.

Description: Large and portly, Herodias has a humanoid body of scarlet hue, and massive, muscled arms. He has a small forked tail and small, bat-like (useless) wings. His face is round and sinister and startlingly human in appearance, and his horns are tall, curving inward and then out again like a goat's. His hooves are black.

AGARES (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -1

MOVE: 15"

HIT DICE: 119 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 60%

TREASURE TYPE: G, P

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +6*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (8' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 232

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Agares, vassal to Geryon, is a duke who commands 31 companies of bone devils. He and Amon, Geryon's most powerful duke, bear no great love one for another, and several times Herodias has had to head off open warfare between the two. Agares customarily fights with a +1 iron-shod staff, but will use any weapons at hand in a fight.

Agares can employ the following spell-like powers, one at a time and one per round: *pyrotechnics, produce flame, know alignment, dispel magic, animate dead, ice storm, detect invisibility, slow, cause earthquake, hold person, hold monster, tongues, wall of ice, teleport*, and

(fulfill another's limited) wish. Agares radiates *fear* in a 1" radius, at will (save vs. spell to avoid). Once per day he can use a *symbol of pain*. He can *summon* 1-4 bone devils with a 65% chance of success, and regenerates 1 point of damage every 3 rounds.

Description: Agares appears as an old man, and has a brittle, quavering voice. He often bears a hawk at his wrist; these birds he captures or bargains for on the Prime Material Plane when summoned thence, and he enjoys training them as messengers or companions. He has gray-scaled, clawed reptilian feet, and a ruddy facial complexion that deepens to a scarlet body skin hue (usually concealed by robes). Agares has a stumpy, gray reptilian tail, and a humanoid body with curved, irregular-looking ribs that make his ribcage look knotted and deformed. Tufts of gray beard are matched by small, stubby gray horns. Agares has watery red eyes and red hooked nails.

MACHALAS (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 16"/21"

HIT DICE: 122 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 60%

TREASURE TYPE: G, P

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-8, *or by weapon type +6*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 60%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (12' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 201

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Machalas is a duke commanding 11 companies of barbed devils at the direction of his master Geryon. The least of Geryon's dukes in both personal power

and influence, Machalas encourages the feuding between his fellow dukes Amon and Agares, while taking the side of neither, and hopes to appear Geryon's most steadfast and reliable vassal so as to gain the favor of "The Wild Beast."

Once per round, Machalas can employ one of the following spell-like powers: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *ice storm*, *push*, *blink*, *jump*, *know alignment*, *detect invisibility*, *read magic* *ESP*, *dispel magic*, *animate dead*, *wall of ice*, *teleport*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Once per day he can *cause insanity* (save vs. spell at -1 to avoid; see DMG for types) by touch, and once per day he can use a *symbol of stunning*. He radiates fear in a 1" radius at will. He can (70% chance of success) summon 1-3 barbed devils. He regenerates 1 hit point every 2 rounds.

Description: Machalas appears as a tall, thin humanoid with black, scaly skin, a black forked tail, black cloven hooves, large black batlike wings, and large jaws (2-8 damage from bite in combat). A nimble flyer, he usually wields a +2 axe or a normal spear in combat. His horned head is a startling fiery red, and his eyes are slanted and entirely white, so that they appear to have no pupils or irises unless examined very closely. His face appears ugly and bat-like (the jaws most prominent), and his voice is a soft, menacing, hissing tone.

6. MALBOLGE

The sixth plane of the Nine Hells is ruled by Baalzebul through his viceroy Moloch (Baalzebul's own abode is not on this plane). Moloch is continually ordered about by his lord and watched by the tribune Bileth, for Baalzebul fears that to allow the Grand Duke to rest undisturbed here for long would enable him to somehow wrest control of Malbolge from the Lord of the Flies.

An outsider might well wonder why Moloch would want to rule such a place, for nothing grows in Malbolge. It is a plane of craggy, tumbled black stone

and ash, filled with stinking vapors, smokes, fire pits, and huge caves and caverns. The air is always hot and choking, and intruders will find that anything flammable remaining in contact with the ground for more than 4 rounds (such as dry wood, paper, hair, dry cloth, and the like) must save versus (normal) fire or burst into flames. Any such substances that are almost continually in contact with the ground (e.g., the soles of boots) must save at the end of every 4-round period.

Malbolge is a noisy place, populated by tormented lemures, malebranche, and occasional spined and styx devils, all of whom suffer at the hands of the cruel Baalzebul (who delights in torture), upon his visits, and the almost equally cruel Moloch. Both

delight in the torture and disfigurement of devils, so many (at least 50%) of the lesser devils found on this plane will hate them to the point of agreeing to active rebellion (if such an effort seems likely to succeed), and such devils are likely (80%) to be missing an arm or leg, or be suffering a similar sort of infirmity, as a result of the amusements of the Grand Duke and his master.

Malbolge is continually patrolled by pairs of malebranche who report to their commander, the pit fiend Bethage; to the legate *Tartach*; or to Moloch himself (or to Baalzebul, if the Lord of the Flies is present). Intruders are always brought alive to the horned devils' commander for torment and questioning (or the malebranche patrol themselves will suffer in the



intruders' place). Few intruders escape, and fewer still are allowed to live for any length of time, for Baalzebul jealously grasps and guards all power and knowledge that he can, seeking to keep it from other archdevils (particularly Mephistopheles and Asmodeus), so as to eventually gain the power to rule all of the hells.

Moloch moves with his consort *Lilith* from fortress to fortress of the malebranche upon Baalzebul's orders (usually brought by the herald Neabaz). Tartach is Moloch's deputy and ambassador to the vassal dukes and to visitors, and *Bileth* is the tribune installed by Baalzebul as a watchdog upon Moloch and others who would take control of the plane. Baalzebul finds it a continual struggle to retain two planes under his own sway, in a diabolic society where all are ambitious and there are not enough planes to go around. All of the vassals and assistants to Moloch, including *Lilith*, are regarded as loyal to Baalzebul, although Tartach and *Lilith* (who feel largely powerless in the current regime) might support a strong bid to seize Malbolge by another archdevil.

The defensive forces of Malbolge consist of nine companies of malebranche under the command of the pit fiend Bethage, and sixteen companies of bone devils led by the pit fiend Herobaal.

LILITH (Princess of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -1

MOVE: 16"/30"

HIT DICE: 71 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 80%

TREASURE TYPE: C, I, S

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-12, or by weapon type +5

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 75%

INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: *L (9' tall)*

PSIONIC ABILITY: 222

Attack/Defense modes: *All/all*

Lilith is consort to Moloch, viceroy of the sixth plane of the Nine Hells. She is held in high regard by many witches on the Prime Material Plane, who hold (and keep secret from others) the rituals for summoning her thence. *Lilith* serves Baalzebul, but her loyalty is not what it used to be; she feels largely powerless in the current regime, and resents being moved here and there at Baalzebul's behest. She often works with the legate Tartach, who is of like mind. *Lilith* is personally most attractive, and many devils will do her small favors as a result.

Lilith can employ at will the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics, produce flame, animate dead, ESP, dispel magic, read magic, tongues, charm person, detect invisibility, darkness 15' radius, invisibility, suggestion, know alignment, polymorph self, fireball (2d6), teleport*, and (fulfill another's limited) wish. Twice per day *Lilith* can employ a *finger of death*, and once per day she can hurl a (4d6) *lightning bolt*. She radiates *fear* at will in a 2" radius (save vs. spell at -2 to avoid). *Lilith* can *summon* 1-2 malebranche with a 60% chance of success. *Lilith* regenerates 3 points of damage every turn.

Description: *Lilith* appears as a beautiful, curvaceous human female of giant stature, save that her eyes are glowing white (pupils and all), her skin is crimson, and she has hooves, a serpent's tail, and small curving horns. She rarely wears garments, cloaking herself in *darkness* (see above) when *summoned* if she deems it necessary. She fights with any weapons available but prefers to strike with her tail, which does 2-12 constriction damage per round; it is long and strong enough to immobilize one M-sized target. She usually bears a slim scimitar or a barbed whip (two 10' strands with metal barbs; these do 1-8 base damage each and can strike the same or

adjacent targets; they can entangle weapons or limbs, but she rarely employs them thus, fearing damage to the weapon). Significantly, a deep lash welt is commonly known in the hells as "*Lilith's Mark*."

TARTACH (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 12"

HIT DICE: 114 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 75%

TREASURE TYPE: C, I, P

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +7*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: *L (10' tall)*

PSIONIC ABILITY: 212

Attack/Defense modes: *All/all*

Tartach serves Baalzebul as legate to Moloch, the viceroy of Malbolge. His loyalty to Baalzebul is outwardly strong, but Tartach feels relegated to a position of minor importance, when elsewhere in the hells many of lesser strength have higher standing. If an archdevil made a bid to gain control of Malbolge that seemed likely to succeed—or if Moloch were menaced in some way—Tartach might aid the attempt, or at least not move to block it. Tartach has a dark, cruel sense of humor, and enjoys tormenting weaker creatures. He fights with a *flame tongue* sword and a *rope of entanglement*.

Tartach can employ the following spell-like powers at will, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics, produce flame, fireball (3d6 damage), dispel magic, detect invisibility, know alignment, hold monster, wall of fire, teleport*, and (fulfill another's limited) wish. Once per

day he can use a *symbol of stunning*, and once per day he can *feeblemind* another creature. Tartach causes *fear* by eye contact (save vs. spell at -3 to avoid effects) on any creatures (one target per round) within a 4" radius. He can *summon* 1-2 malebranche (with a 70% chance of success). Tartach regenerates 2 hit points per round.

Description: Tartach appears as a human of giant stature wearing a beard and mustache and with stubby, hooked horns on his forehead. He has no tail, but his feet have the pads and fur (but not the claws) of a lion, and his skin is of a fiery orange hue. He wears robes of black or purple silk, and walks with cold dignity.

BILETH (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -3

MOVE: 14"/21"

HIT DICE: 121 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 75%

TREASURE TYPE: C, P

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-12, 2-12

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (9½' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 224

Attack/Defense modes: *All/all*

Bileth serves Baalzebul as tribune on Malbolge, acting as a watchdog and a check on the actions of Moloch. Bileth speaks with the authority of Baalzebul, but stands apart from the regime run by Moloch, serving as a justiciar independent of the viceroy. Moloch can do nothing against Bileth, and must submit to his commands, but has tried to

undermine the tribune's effectiveness in Malbolge by spreading the word among the malebranche that Bileth is insane.

Bileth can use the following spell-like powers at will, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *wall of fire*, *anti-magic shell*, *dispel magic*, *detect invisibility*, *know alignment*, *charm person*, *suggestion*, *ESP*, *tongues*, *detect lie*, *repulsion*, *teleport*, and (fulfill another's *limited*) *wish*. Once per day he can use a *death spell*, and twice per day he can cause a *flame strike*. Bileth causes *fear* by touch (save vs. spell at -2 to avoid) and can summon 1-2 malebranche (75% chance of success) or Baalzebul himself (5% chance of success). Bileth regenerates 2 hit points per round.

Description: Bileth appears as a large man clad in gilded coat-of-plate. He uses weapons only in a pinch, preferring to fight with his fists (2-12 damage each), backed up by his massive Strength. He is bearded, crimson-skinned, and has horns and hooves. He is tailless, but has large black batlike leathery wings. Once per day he can breathe fire (in a cone 25' long and 10' wide at its end, doing 3-18 damage; save vs. breath weapon for 2-12), but he will do this only if angered or hard-pressed.

7. MALADOMINI

The seventh plane of the hells is also ruled by Baalzebul, who dwells there in a great fortress of black stone. Baalzebul's fortress, Malagard, sprawls for many miles, and consists of countless black spired towers linked by many open and covered bridge-spans that crisscross and slant crazily in all directions. Here Baalzebul is attended by his consort *Bafts*, his herald *Neabaz*, and his marshal *Barbatos*, plus malebranche and many lesser devils of all sorts whom he has commanded to service. Malagard's rooms, passages, and dungeons are so vast and numerous that it is said not even the Lord of the Flies himself has visited all of them. Most of those who escape cells of torment in Malagard flee to the dungeons, seldom penetrated

very deeply by the devils, and many weird creatures are said to roam this lightless underworld.

The fortress above contains many rich and sumptuously furnished chambers, many cells for prisoners and for larvae awaiting use, and rooms upon rooms that are choked with garbage. Filth of all sorts, including carrion and anything that is broken and useless (for none of the devils here can be bothered to repair anything) is carried to neglected areas of Malagard by servant spined devils, and tossed into any unused space, so that entire towers of the fortress are crammed with reeking debris.

Outside, the plane of Maladomini is very similar to Malbolge: hot underfoot (see Malbolge, above, for effects on flammable objects) and filled with stinking vapors, earth tremors and underground explosions, fire pits, smokes, and huge caves and caverns. Maladomini's surface is also despoiled by vast quarries where lesser devils and enslaved prisoners toil ceaselessly to cut the stones from which Malagard and the castles of the malebranche are built. Roads wind and crisscross the landscape from quarry to quarry to the various castles, and the entire plane is littered with the tumbled ruins of long-ago cities and towers, and the ever-larger new works.

Great arched bridges, carved with diabolic faces, span the rivers of molten lava that cut across Maladomini, and from the rivers canals have been cut to carry the liquid fire, so that it encircles every castle of the malebranche with a moat of leaping flames. The rivers of lava are swelled by volcanic cascades and eruptions, and run in the end to a great sea of lava that seems to encircle the plane. Within this sea are a ring of volcanic mountains, and within this ring lies the confusion of Malagard, malebranche castles, ruins, roads, and quarries. Baalzebul is said to have vast collections of gems and plants (the latter tended continually by enslaved creatures) in Malagard, but no green things grow in this plane outside Malagard's walls.

Neabaz (as herald) is the only devil allowed by Baalzebul to move freely about the hells. Barbatos

is charged with the duty of arranging malebranche messengers and weaponry so that the armies of Maladomini can be gathered quickly for battle. These malebranche armies—60 companies under the duke *Abigor*, and 28 under the duke *Zepar*—are customarily occupied with the endless construction of Malagard, other fortresses, and linking roads. Spined devils, typically overseen by styx devils or (rarely) bone devils, feed and tend to the wants of the malebranche laborers. Pit fiends are noticeably absent from Baalzebul's service on Maladomini; the Lord of the Flies suspects all such of being spies for Asmodeus, and is reluctant to allow any of the creatures on the same plane he inhabits.

BAFTIS (Princess of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -1

MOVE: 16"/30"

HIT DICE: 79 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 80%

TREASURE TYPE: D, G

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-8 *or by weapon type* +5

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 75%

INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (9' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 220

Attack/Defense modes: *All/all*

Baftis is consort to Baalzebul, The Lord of the Flies. A quiet, subservient consort, she is more than a little afraid of her lord, and rarely acts on her own behalf without specific permission from him. Baftis is somewhat proud and will be outraged if her person or belongings are threatened by lesser creatures. Her



fanged bite does 28 points of damage. She normally carries a bronze spear.

Baftis can employ the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *wall of fire*, *wall of smoke* (= fog), *animate dead*, *dispel magic*, *charm person*, *suggestion*, *detect invisibility*, *darkness 15' radius*, *paralyzation* (= hold person or monster, by touch, lasts 1-3 turns; save vs. paralyzation to avoid), *teleport*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Once per day Baftis can employ a *finger of death*, and thrice per day she can *heal* herself or others (by touch). She causes *fear* by speaking to a creature within 3" (save vs. spell at -1 to avoid). Baftis can *summon* 1-3 malebranche with a 70% chance of success. She regenerates 1 point of damage every 3 rounds.

Description: Baftis appears as a tall, attractive, but rather forbidding human female, save for her tall, spired horns, batlike wings, crimson skin, and hooves. She has no tail, and—unusual for a devil—eyes of lavender hue. She almost always wears loose, open robes; it is said she is sensitive about the lighter shade of her skin down her back—of a human, almost ivory hue. Once a human on the Prime Material Plane uttered an oath mentioning “the pearly spine of Baftis,” and she took that as a summons, appearing and rending the unfortunate with her jaws and claws (which do 1-3 damage each when she is weaponless).

NEABAZ (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -3

MOVE: 16"/30"

HIT DICE: 124 hit points

% IN LAIR: 15%

TREASURE TYPE: *See below*

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-6 or by weapon type +4

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (6' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 190

Attack/Defense modes: *All/all*

Neabaz serves Baalzebul as herald, and as such is rarely idle. He respects his master and likes his work, for he is placed in the Nine Hells well above any station he could achieve by his own means, due to his association with the Lord of the Flies.

Physically weak in comparison to other greater devils, Neabaz has by Baalzebul's orders been provided with magical weaponry to augment his means of personal defense. His bare fists do only 1-6 damage each, and his chief attack is blood drain: When his human-like mouth is open, he can extrude a foot-long proboscis from within, and suck blood (1-6 points per round, both upon initial contact and thereafter for as long as he can grip the victim). Neabaz is careful and polite at all times, fearing to offend an archdevil (and any creature may be a polymorphed archdevil, to his slightly paranoid mind).

Neabaz can use the following spell-like powers at will, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *fireball* (2d6), *dispel magic*, *detect magic*, *read magic*, *read languages*, *tongues*, *know alignment*, *detect invisibility*, *teleport*, and (fulfill another's limited)

wish. Once per day he can *slay living* (by touch), and at will he can cause *fear* in a 2" radius. Neabaz can *summon* (40% chance of success) 1-3 malebranche, or (50% chance of success) 1-4 bone devils. He regenerates 1 hit point every 2 rounds.

Description: Neabaz appears as a smoothly polite, cold-blooded, and very handsome man—save for his tiny pointed horns and transparent, housefly-like wings. He is customarily garbed in black tunic (open at the shoulders to accommodate his wings) and breeches, with a hat and cape of rich, blood-red silk. The cape is magical, having the ability to give forth an aura of flames (treat as a "cold version" *fire shield* that will not harm Neabaz's wings) up to four times every 24 hours at the wearer's will, each aura lasting up to three rounds as desired. Neabaz also bears a *flame tongue* blade that, when grasped, can *know alignment* of any creature pointed at, and fire 9 *magic missiles* (1 missile per spell) every 24 hours. (These items are believed to be of Prime Material Plane origin.) Neabaz carries other treasure only upon Baalzebul's business and explicit orders.

BARBATOS (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -3

MOVE: 16"

HIT DICE: 122 hit points

% IN LAIR: 60%

TREASURE TYPE: *See below*

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +7*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (12' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 212

Attack/Defense modes: *All/all*

Barbatos is the marshal of Maladomini, responsible for all of Baalzebul's armies on that plane, and, through Moloch, administering also the forces of Malbolge. Authoritarian and a shrewd judge both of his warriors and of tactical problems, he has won Baalzebul's respect and limited trust. He has never displayed any personal ambitions, nor (at any time) his true feelings, so that among the hierarchy of the hells his loyalty to his master, and therefore his actions in any change of the status quo, remain unknown. Barbatos moves with lightning speed in battle, having two weapon attacks per round. He carries treasure only upon the orders and specific business of Baalzebul, and wears a gray cloak with a green hood fringed in scarlet.

Barbatos can at will use the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *dispel magic*, *detect invisibility*, *detect lie*, *detect magic*, *charm person*, *fly*, *know alignment*, *tongues*, *speak with animals*, *repulsion*, *wall of fire*, *teleport*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Once per day he can use a *symbol of sleep*, and six times per day he can cast a 4d6 *fireball*. Barbatos breathes *fear* in a cone up to 4" distant, 2" wide at its furthest extent (save vs. breath weapon to avoid). He can *summon* 1-4 malebranche with a 70% chance of success, and regenerates 2 hit points per round.

If summoned to the Prime Material Plane, Barbatos will always appear with 2-8 malebranche. On that plane, he can track as a ranger, *pass without trace*, and *move silently* if he wills; break wizard locks by touch; and *detect treasure* (of a metal or mineral nature, as in the *wand of metal and mineral detection*) in a 3" radius. Those who know how to *summon* him are few, because he and his malebranche guard can usually destroy them or bear them to the hells for torment.

Description: Barbatos appears as a bearded, horned man-like giant with crimson skin, black hooves, and a tail. His eyes are green, and he talks with a rich, persuasive voice.

ABIGOR (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*
 NO. APPEARING: 1
 ARMOR CLASS: -2
 MOVE: 14"/22"
 HIT DICE: 120 hit points
 % IN LAIR: 65%
 TREASURE TYPE: A, I
 NO. OF ATTACKS: 1
 DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-16 or by weapon type +7
 SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*
 SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*
 MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%
 INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*
 ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*
 SIZE: L (7½' tall)
 PSIONIC ABILITY: 210
 Attack/Defense modes: All/all

Abigor is a duke in the service of Baalzebul, commanding 60 companies of malebranche. He enjoys destroying other creatures in battle, and will not miss a chance to fight a weaker opponent. He wields a +2 battleaxe and a mace, and if he loses these in a skirmish he will employ anything available. Weaponless, he strikes with one massive fist while warding off attacks with the other. A blow from his hand does 2-16 damage.

Abigor can use the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *animate dead*, *dispel magic*, *speak with dead* (who can have been dead for up to 600 days), *detect invisibility*, *detect magic*, *know alignment*, *tongues*, *teleport*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Once per day Abigor can employ a *symbol of stunning*, and once per day he can *spell turn* (as in *ring of spell turning*) a spell cast at him back at the caster (note that he can do this even with a spell that his magic resistance has protected him from). Abigor causes *fear* by touch (save vs. spell at -1 to avoid). He can *summon* 1-2 malebranche with a 70% chance of success, and regenerates 2 hit points per round.

Description: Abigor appears as an ochre-skinned, hairless humanoid with ruddy diabolic features, small horns, black hooves, and a forked tail. He has large crimson batlike wings, and a loud, bellowing voice.

ZEPAR (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*
 NO. APPEARING: 1
 ARMOR CLASS: -3
 MOVE: 14"
 HIT DICE: 118 hit points
 % IN LAIR: 65%
 TREASURE TYPE: A, P
 NO. OF ATTACKS: 1
 DAMAGE/ATTACK: *See below*
 SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*
 SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*
 MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%
 INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*
 ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*
 SIZE: M (5' tall)
 PSIONIC ABILITY: 217
 Attack/Defense modes: All/all

Zepar is a duke in the service of Baalzebul, and leads 28 companies of malebranche. Vicious and arrogant, he seldom engages in combat, but uses his magical powers and his servants to bully weaker creatures. When in a black mood, he wades into the hapless lemures and dishes out all the punishment he can deliver. He fights with a hand axe and a short sword, both envenomed like those of an erinyes (save vs. poison or faint for 1-6 melee rounds).

Zepar can employ the following spell-like powers at will, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *animate dead*, *spectral force*, *blink*, *fly*, *detect invisibility*, *tongues*, *suggestion*, *teleport*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. His touch can (at will) cause one of the following: *fear* (save vs. spell at -1 or cower on the spot, dropping weapons, if save fails);

lust (cease hostilities and approach the first creature of like race and opposite sex; this effect lasts only 4 rounds and ceases in any case when the affected person is attacked—by Zepar, the intended object of his or her affections, or another); or a *shocking grasp* (11-18 points of damage). Once per day Zepar can *polymorph other* (save at -1) and once per day employ a *symbol of insanity*. He can *summon* 1-3 malebranche with a 70% chance of success, and regenerates 1 hit point per round.

Description: Zepar appears as a slight, dark-complexioned man dressed in scarlet armor, with a grotesque clubfoot and a forked tail. He has small horns (concealed by his helm) and speaks in a grating, contemptuous voice. Beneath his armor (without which he is AC -2) is crimson skin, and a "normal" human foot that has retractile black catlike claws (1-4 raking damage if unbooted).

8. CANIA

The frigid eighth plane of the hells is ruled by Mephistopheles, the mighty Lord of No Mercy or Cold Lord. This scheming archdevil rules the frozen wastes of Caina with the help of his consort *Baalphegor* and his staff: *Barbas*, chamberlain of Mephistar (Mephistopheles' iron citadel) and guardian of Mephistopheles' wealth and treasures; *Adonides*, steward of Caina, who oversees the administration and defense of the realm; and *Bele*, justiciar, who sits in judgement of all disputes within Caina. Mephistopheles is cunning enough to allow the appearance of justice—and thus win the ease and resulting loyalty of his vassals, as well as reassurance for other devils elsewhere in the Nine Hells who might consider supporting him in a bid to overthrow Asmodeus, showing them that an independent judiciary would be installed under the rule of Mephistopheles, were he to become Overlord of Hell.

Malebranche and spined devils staff the iron citadel of Mephistar, which perches high in the icy

mountains at the heart of the plane. Much of Caina is a land of ice-covered boulders and mountains, ruins of stone (for it took the devils long to learn that nothing on the glaciers could withstand the inexorable ice), and sprawling glaciers. *Bifrons*, one of the dukes of Caina, rules from a cold blue palace carved out of the slow-moving ice of a rift in the center of the great glacier Nargus. This glacier is staffed by the ice devils who populate the plane, and by spined devils, who perform the most menial tasks.

Mephistopheles is one of the most careful and suspicious of the archdevils, and the halls and chambers of Mephistar are patrolled and inhabited by devils

in accordance with a strict schedule of activities. Only Bele, Barbas, and Adonides are free of this iron regimentation, and Mephistopheles wants to know where they are and what they are doing at all times. All three devils delight in deceiving their lord as to precisely where they are and what they are doing, but such deceptions are always small things, for they dare go no further in light of the possible punishments.

A visitor will find Caina numbingly cold—without heat, most warm-blooded creatures can only survive for a few hours before suffering chills, later frostbite, and then death. Certainly any such creature that goes to sleep, falls unconscious, or is rendered immobile in

the open without heat will die shortly. Ice devils will be immediately attracted to any fire (note that the raw materials for such a blaze will have to be brought by the visitor, since no combustibles are to be found), and will attack without hesitation. If far from Nargus, an ice devil is not likely to inform Mephistopheles or his staff of the existence of intruders unless there is a chance that other devils have seen them too, and are likely to report them. If a party should escape a lone ice devil, the latter will not warn others of their presence, but will itself remain alert for signs of them.

Were it not for the cold and the lack of food (some tales speak of *remorhaz* or “glacier worms” in Caina, but if any exist they must be very rare), Caina would offer intruders many inviting places of concealment—there are many hidden valleys in the mountains, and countless ice-caves. Corpses, it should be noted, will freeze and be preserved perfectly, so killers of all sorts are advised to seek deep crevasses or snowbanks to conceal such remains.

The dukes of Caina are *Hutijin*, who commands two mighty legions of pit fiends, the nobles of Caina (including *Silcharde*, *Bechard*, *Guland*, *Sphandor*, and *Buldumech*); *Bifrons*, who commands 26 companies of ice devils in Nargus; and *Nexroth*, who leads 16 companies of malebranche. The pit fiends and malebranche dwell in the rocky spires and pits of the outermost fringes of Caina. These are hot regions crisscrossed by colder, steaming, slimy waters which at length give way to marches of icy ooze which rise at length into the frozen mountains of the plane’s interior.

The strength and ambition of the pit fiends (particularly those named above) are a weakness in Mephistopheles’ control over his own plane—a weakness encouraged and delighted in by his foes—particularly *Baalzebul*, who has spies among the malebranche, and seeks to foster unrest. Only a few of the pit fiends remain strictly loyal to Mephistopheles (without *Hutijin*, the Cold Lord would soon face open revolt and could not hold the plane). Most seek to gain



the most power they can in any change of rulership, and favor dissent and change among the archdevils as the only way to better their own lot. None have openly defied Mephistopheles yet, but a time will come... unless, of course, Mephistopheles defeats Asmodeus, whereupon their loyalty will be loudly conspicuous. Mephistopheles is openly distrustful of Nexroth, who is totally selfish and loyal only to himself; he will do whatever seems best for his own advancement. Nexroth retains his command only because he seems the most reliable of the pit fiends, and Mephistopheles dares not allow open conflict within Caina for fear that another archdevil would take advantage of the situation. If not for this, the Cold Lord would cheerfully shift the command whenever it suited him, playing the pit fiends off against one another indefinitely.

BAALPHEGOR (Princess of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 19"/29"

HIT DICE: 82 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 90%

TREASURE TYPE: R, X, Z

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-12

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 80%

INTELLIGENCE: *Supra-genius*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (5½' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 229

Attack/Defense modes: *All/all*

Baalphegor is consort to Mephistopheles, and a most highly regarded she-devil. Personally attractive (and a practiced diplomat), she is charming in manner and

artful in thought; she has invented many of the strategies and devices used in the hells. Asmodeus regards her as one of his most valuable assets, and tolerates the machinations of Mephistopheles largely because of her. Baalphegor's own desires are seldom revealed; she appears loyal to the hells and devoted to Mephistopheles, and manages to avoid making a distinction between the two.

Baalphegor can use the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *animate dead*, *dispel magic*, *charm person*, *suggestion*, *detect invisibility*, *enchant an item*, *permanency*, *teleport*, and (fulfill another's *limited*) *wish*. Once per day Baalphegor can employ a *finger of death*, once per day unleash *chain lightning*, and once per day *heal* herself. She causes *fear* (2" range) by pointing at the desired creature (save vs. spell at -2 to avoid). She can summon 1-2 devils with a 75% chance of success. Baalphegor regenerates 1 point of damage every 4 rounds.

Description: Baalphegor is a musical-voiced, beautiful female, apparently human, save for her ruby-red eyes, forked tail, and slim, delicate leathery wings. Her feet are human in appearance, and she is sleek and curvaceous, with cinnamon-brown skin. She appears young and carefree, but when angered her light voice can crack like a whip, and her eyes flash fire.

BELE (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -3

MOVE: 14"/20"

HIT DICE: 112 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 95%

TREASURE TYPE: Nil

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +8*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (6' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 232

Attack/Defense modes: *All/all*

Bele serves Mephistopheles as justiciar of Caina, spending most of his time in the fortress of Mephistar, dispensing impartial justice within the Cold Lord's realm. Some in Caina (among the pit fiends) openly doubt if Bele's justice is impartial—ut it is true that Mephistopheles does not intervene on a case-by-case basis to overrule or influence his judgments. Mephistopheles and Bele do agree upon (and periodically discuss) the basic principles and some specific details of what precisely "justice," in Caina, is and should be. As a result, Bele's judgments are opposed to any rebellious or disorderly actions, although they occasionally stand against Mephistopheles' orders. Perhaps the most important fact in the matter is that Bele would not have his present office without the permission of Mephistopheles; if Bele's judgments ever run too much against his master's will, that office will end. Bele has no real treasure, on Mephistopheles' orders.

Bele can use the following spell-like powers at will, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *ice storm*, *ESP*, *detect lie*, *know alignment*, *tongues*, *read magic*, *read languages*, *hold person*, *hold monster*, *fools gold*, *legend lore*, *teleport*, and (fulfill another's *limited*) *wish*. Twice per day he can cause a *flame strike*, and once per day he can *banish* (as in the spell *banishment*) a creature (or creatures) of up to 16 levels or hit dice to its own plane. Bele causes *fear* by voice tone in a 6" radius (save vs. spell at -3 to avoid). He can summon 1-3 ice devils (60% chance of success), or 1-2 pit fiends (30%). Bele regenerates 1 hit point per round.

Description: Bele appears as a tall, handsome, hollow-eyed man with ivory skin, a curling beard and pencil-thin mustache, a low, nasal voice, tiny horns, and long black robes. Beneath the robes are concealed a short forked tail, a crimson-skinned lower torso, and a belt bearing Bele's black rod of office (equivalent to a *rod of smiting*) and a *dagger of venom*. When Bele disrobes, his leathery wings can spread to a surprisingly large (20') wingspan.

ADONIDES (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 16"/28"

HIT DICE: 121 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 55%

TREASURE TYPE: R, X, Z

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +7*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (8' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 228

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Adonides serves Mephistopheles as the steward of Caina, responsible for the security and internal stability of the realm. His experiences thus far have made him mistrust all pit fiends (even watching the dukes Nexroth and Hutijin with a wary eye), and to suspect every ice devil and malebranche of being a spy for Baalzebul. Adonides is naturally cruel and high-handed, and—since Barbas is chamberlain of Mephistar, and the steward has no authority there—the steward of Caina spends much of his time roaming the plane with a guard of 16 ice devils, searching for and punishing intruders and those

who misbehave or act to betray Mephistopheles. In battle Adonides bears a twisted, spiked +1 staff (1-8 +1 damage, +7 if Adonides wields it) with which he can strike twice (against 2 different targets, if he so wishes) in a round.

Adonides can use the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *ice storm*, *wall of ice*, *cone of cold* (1d4 +16 damage), *lightning bolt* (4d6), *detect lie*, *know alignment*, *dispel magic*, *teleport*, and (fulfill another's *limited*) *wish*. Once per day Adonides can *heal* himself (or another, by touch), and once per day he can use a *symbol of stunning*. He causes *fear* by pointing at the desired creature (one target per round; save vs. spell at -1 to avoid), and can *summon* 1-6 ice devils (70% chance of success) when desired. He regenerates 2 hit points per round.

Description: Adonides appears as a young, long-haired, darkly handsome man of giant stature. He has unusual glittering black eyes and a fanged grin. The hair hides two small horns; Adonides wears robes to hide his short forked tail and scarlet torso.

BARBAS (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -3

MOVE: 16"

HIT DICE: 110 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 95%

TREASURE TYPE: R, X, Z

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +7*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (10' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 224

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Barbas serves Mephistopheles as chamberlain, running the citadel of Mephistar and seeing to the security of Mephistopheles' treasure. Proud and arrogant, Barbas is as openly cruel as any devil in Caina is allowed to be under the rule of Mephistopheles. Totally unscrupulous and dishonest, Barbas is kept in check—and the treasure in his care where it is supposed to be—by the combined scrutiny of Bele, Adonides, and Mephistopheles himself. He retains his position by the brilliant deceptions he practices in the name of security, catching or misdirecting the spies of other archdevils and deflecting the greed of those native to Caina. Barbas is lazy and gross-bodied, but snake-quick in battle, and attacks twice per round with his *staff of striking*. He also bears a goad, which is an iron rod topped with a hook at one end. It was fashioned by a chaotic good smith, and does 4-24 damage to devils and other LE creatures, but only 2-8 damage to others (of S or M size; only 1-6 vs. L). Barbas also bears a *dagger of venom* (perhaps more than one) hidden about his person.

Barbas can employ the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *wall of ice*, *lightning bolt* (2d6), *detect lie*, *ESP*, *tongues*, *hold person*, *shield*, *teleport*, and (fulfill another's *limited*) *wish*. Once per day Barbas can use a *symbol of insanity*, and once per day he can *slay living* (by touch; saving throw at +1). Barbas causes *fear* by eye contact (at will, one victim per round, 4" effective range). He can *summon* 1-3 ice devils (60% chance of success), or 2-8 spined devils (70%). He regenerates 1 hit point per round.

Description: Barbas appears as a giant, bearded man with large lips and an enormous belly. He wears voluminous robes, which conceal his forked tail, hooves, and crimson skin covered with thick, oily black hair.

BIFRONS (Duke of Hell)

MOVE: 18"

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -3

HIT DICE: 141 hit points

% IN LAIR: 65%

TREASURE TYPE: R, Q (x6), Z

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *See below*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (12' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 228

Attack/Defense Modes: All/all

Bifrons is a mighty duke, leading 26 companies of ice devils into battle at the behest of Mephistopheles. The Cold Duke rules the glaciers of Caina's interior from his ice palace in Nargus, and appears both vigilant and loyal to Mephisto. Bifrons is a clear-headed, rather dispassionate philosopher. He enjoys arguments and contests of reason and logic, but does not let these distract him from more pragmatic concerns. (Bear in mind that Bifrons is exceptionally intelligent and lawful evil, and will approach and leave all such arguments convinced that a social order wherein the stronger rule the weaker is the only practical way to exist, and that good promotes incompetence and mediocrity.)

Bifrons collects gems, enjoys skillful ice sculpture (although doing none himself), has a natural knack for navigating (knowing where he is, even on the Prime Material Plane, and intuitively knowing accurate compass directions), and, has the awesome strength of a cloud giant. He bears an envenomed scimitar (with effects as for the weapon of an erinyes) and a flail (each doing +7 damage in Bifron's hands),

but usually fights barehanded, each fist striking for 4-24 damage. He is immune to cold damage of all types (including magic and dragon breath).

Bifrons can employ the following spell-like powers at will, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *dispel magic*, *ice storm*, *cone of cold* (6d4 +6 damage), *detect magic*, *detect invisibility*, *teleport*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Once per day he can unleash *chain lightning* (7d6 damage), and once per day use a *symbol of stunning*. He causes *fear* (6" range) by eye contact (save vs. spell at -2 to avoid). He can *summon* 1-6 ice devils with a 70% chance of success. (If Bifrons is encountered in Nargus itself, 9-12 ice devils will be in attendance about him.) Optionally, he can *summon* 1-8 spined devils (60% chance of success). Bifrons regenerates 2 hit points per round.

Description: Bifrons appears as a wingless, gray-skinned and heavily muscled devil with stubby horns on his brow, a humanoid torso, and a snake-like lower body (from the hip down, with no legs). He has totally white, slanted eyes, large nostrils and mouth, and a deep, rumbling voice.

9. NESSUS

The vast and gloomy ninth and nethermost plane of the hells is known as Nessus, or Cocytus (after the lake therein), and is the personal realm of Asmodeus, Overlord of the hells. Asmodeus inhabits a grand palace, a fey court of darksome beauty, which rests upon the floor of the lowest rift in Nessus. If this abode has a name, it is little used and unknown to men. It is known that smoke rises from its very stones when they are trod by one not of lawful evil alignment, and that Asmodeus has gathered here all objects that he finds beautiful (including much seen as beautiful by man).

It is known that Asmodeus can summon each archdevil to his court here, once a year, but more details of his palace are few indeed, understandably, since few travelers return whole to the Prime

Material Plane after being in the clutches of the Great Devil himself. All manner of beings may be found within its extensive halls, for Asmodeus, a master strategist, makes use of all the powers and talents available in the hells to further his own ends. His bodyguards and personal servants are the mighty pit fiends; outside of the palace, one is more likely to encounter them in Nessus than any other creature, for they are constantly flying here and there at the Overlord's bidding. Knowledge of the geography of Nessus is similarly incomplete and possibly inaccurate, but it is known to be a rocky, misty realm that holds many dangers for the unwary.

Lethe, the river of forgetfulness, winds aimlessly about Nessus; no mortal has ever found its source or outflow. All creatures who touch its clear green waters (except devils, who are immune to Lethe's power) must save vs. poison or be permanently *feeble-minded* (only a *wish*, *alter reality*, or *limited wish* will reverse this), and even if cured, victims will lose all memories of the time preceding their cure. Some say that the river Lethe flows through dimensional space in some incomprehensible way, and thereby also flows on the Prime Material Plane. It may thus provide another entry and exit to the deepest plane of the hells—but if any have traveled this route and survived, they do not talk of it.

The lake of Cocytus lies far from the palace of the Overlord, high up in a bowl of rock surrounded by crags. It is frozen; a glassy-smooth surface of ice tens of feet thick—and within the ice are trapped the bodies of all who have ever ventured across it, for the ice always rises suddenly, in jaws, to engulf them. A *dispel magic* or *slow* will slow this action enough for a creature to escape or be helped clear, in haste, and a *wall of force* or even a *wall of ice* will temporarily jam the jaws open and also permit escape. A *shatter* spell or the physical force wielded by most creatures will not affect the ice, but a *crystalbrittle* spell cast upon it will render the ice fragile (to the extent of the spell's area of effect), subject to the effects of all normal

weapons and implements, and a *hammer of thunderbolts* will shatter it easily (perhaps also damaging a trapped victim). Any magical and/or natural combination of strength equal to a storm giant's (such as the natural might of Asmodeus or Geryon) can affect the ice of Cocytus.

On the slopes between the crags that surround the Lake of Fear (Cocytus) and the winding river Lethe stands a huge wood of trees whose leaves are always burning, but are not consumed by the flames. A blazing branch taken from one of these trees will burn—equal in heat and fire effects to a normal blaze, doing 1–4 points of burn damage per contact—ceaselessly, even if taken to another plane. Water, cold, winds, lack of air, etc., will not douse it, nor will water- or cold-related spells. Nothing short of a *limited wish* will douse it while in the hells; outside the hells, a *dispel magic* or contact with the area of effect of a *protection from evil* (for such a branch is strongly evil) will extinguish it forever, but *affect normal fires* will have no effect. If a branch is broken off, it will bleed, yielding a small quantity of blue-green ichor, a substance fabled in magical lore as an ingredient in many potions, spell inks, and processes for the making of magical items.

Within the course of the river Lethe is the central area of Nessus, a region of twisted and scorched rock broken by many rifts and knife-edged ridges, and within this area the firewinds sweep. A firewind is a permanent *wall of fire* (as in the spell) of triple strength and damage, typically up to a quarter of a mile in length, that sweeps over the ground in the forefront of a howling wind (26" movement rate). The firewinds blow at random, and may join or break apart in accordance with the topography of the land or for no apparent reason. Usually they will sweep over a creature on the ground in a single round, enveloping it briefly for 4–24 points of damage (save for half damage). Loose garments, small birds, and so forth may be blown away with the firewind, but in its wake there is relative calm. The bones of many

creatures litter this inner desolation of Nessus, and a traveler will find that the rifts grow deeper as one heads inward, so that the bottom of the lowest plane of the hells is a huge bowl or gulf. Here the air is always smoky, and the firewinds howl, and here, at the bottom of the lowest rift (where the firewinds do not reach, but pass overhead) is the infernally grand palace of Asmodeus. Some sages say that in the center of the palace is a great *gate* that will allow transport from this place to any plane (of the user's choice) in the multiverse. This gate, they say, will allow passage of any number or amount of creatures and objects, and Asmodeus cannot destroy it or affect its operation. (Devils and other creatures of lawful evil alignment attempting to use it, regardless of power,

will be destroyed.) Some believe that the Overlord deliberately built his palace atop it so as to control access to and from the hells; somewhere in the Prime Material Plane, it is hinted, lies the way into the Nine Hells via this gate. The existence of this gate is supported by the legend that to escape the hells, one must descend to the deepest part of the plane. The maker of the gate is unknown, but is probably one or more of the greater gods.

Asmodeus rarely leaves his palace, making his will known and acted upon by servants of apparently unshakeable loyalty. *Adramalech* serves him as chancellor, recording the numbers, acquisitions, and transformations of the lemurs and larvae, torments suffered by devils, the names of those who serve the



diabolic on other planes, and the making and terms of all pacts and contracts. The Keeper of the Records answers to no one but the Overlord himself, and has his own tower in the palace, ringed at all times by six pit fiends. This guard detail is ordered by the pit fiend Baalberith, major domo of the palace, probably at the behest of Asmodeus, and is little liked by Adramalech. A similar guard rings the chamber or person of *Bensozia*, consort to Asmodeus, at all times. Another 54 pit fiends round out the palace guard. *Phongor* is the most feared devil in Nessus, after Asmodeus himself; he serves Asmodeus as inquisitor, and little information escapes his probing questions and methods of persuasion.

The greatest pit fiend of all, the awesomely scarred, broken-winged Alastor, serves Asmodeus as executioner. His strength is that of a storm giant's, and he never speaks. It is said in the hells that if all were swept away and Asmodeus could choose but one devil as a companion, that one would be neither consort nor lieutenant, but Alastor the Grim. Another pit fiend, Martinet, is constable of Nessus, responsible for the personal armies of Asmodeus. These armies camp eternally around the palace, and their generals confer often with the Overlord. These proud dukes are: *Buer*, who commands 15 companies of pit fiends; *Morax*, leader of nine such companies; *Bune*, general of 30 companies of malebranche; *Rimmon*, head of five companies of ice devils; and *Zagum*, leader of 30 companies of barbed devils. It is said that the nycadaemon Daerith once appeared unannounced over the lake of Cocytus and flew toward the palace of Asmodeus, and before it reached the crags about the lake was destroyed utterly, torn apart bodily by pit fiends on patrol. With such guardians, it is small wonder why the mysteries of the plane are so many, and the visitors who return whence they came so few.

BENSOZIA (Queen of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 18"/26"

HIT DICE: 86 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 95%

TREASURE TYPE: C, R, X

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-12

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 80%

INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (6' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 261

Attack/Defense modes: *All/all*

Bensozia is the consort of Asmodeus, and staunchly supports her mate. She is personally the most powerful of the consorts, but her influence is entirely linked with that of Asmodeus; it is said that "Bensozia speaks not, save by the leave of the Great One." Bensozia seems happy in her position, although she is not always physically with Asmodeus, but her natural manner is coldly polite and haughty, seldom revealing her true feelings. She bears a brass scepter that does 4-16 damage to all creatures of good alignment, 3-12 damage to devils, and 2-8 damage to others. Empty-handed, she strikes with her hands for 2-12 damage.

Bensozia can use the following spell-like powers at will, once per round and only one at a time: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *animate dead*, *fireball* (3d6), *lightning bolt* (2d6), *dispel magic*, *charm person*, *charm monster*, *suggestion*, *ESP*, *detect invisibility*, *detect magic*, *identify*, *sending* (to Asmodeus only), *teleport*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Twice per day Bensozia can employ a *finger of death*, and once per day *heal* herself. She causes *fear* (6" range) by speaking to an individual (save vs. spell at -2 to avoid), and can *summon*

1-2 pit fiends (50% chance), or 1-4 malebranche (30% chance). Bensozia regenerates 1 point of damage every 3 rounds.

Description: Bensozia is a tall statuesque, human-appearing devil. She has long white hair, large glistening black eyes, scarlet skin, large brown hooves, and a forked tail. She always wears loose black robes with a scarlet silk lining within, and, as Queen of Hell, a diadem of beaten gold set with large rubies (total value 26,000 gp).

ADRAMALECH (Chancellor of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -1

MOVE: 14"

HIT DICE: 133 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 90%

TREASURE TYPE: I, S, Z

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +6*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 75%

INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (6' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 245

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Adramalech, the cruel and malicious Chancellor of Hell, aids Asmodeus greatly from his tower in the Overlord's palace in Nessus. The Keeper of Records answers only to Asmodeus, and spends much of his time observing (through his spies and openly recognized informants, the latter including all pit fiends in the hierarchy of the hells) events in the infernal regions and elsewhere. The Infernal Records (sometimes called "The Book of Fire" by men, although the records actually take up many folios and papers) contain all true names of devils known to Adramalech

(note that he has memorized those of all dukes and archdevils in self-defense; thus, none will attack him). He also records the numbers, acquisitions, and transformations of lemures and larvae; torments suffered by devils; the ranks and powers of all devils and suspected or known alliance or deceptions among them; the names, ranks, and locations of all who serve the devils on other planes; and the making and terms of all pacts and contracts.

When not engaged in updating the records or keeping an ear to the ground, Adramalech likes to amuse himself by watching weaker creatures—particularly humans and elves brought from the Prime Material Plane—being tortured and slain by devils in the dungeons of the palace or in the encampments of the infernal armies outside its walls. Adramalech carries a +2 staff which can *slay living* (save at +1) by touch, and *disintegrate* (devils save at -1) by touch once in every 6 turns. His loyalty to Asmodeus is not entire—he often tries to conceal small items of information or magical items seized from intruders from the Overlord, under the guise of absent-mindedness.

Adramalech can employ the following spell-like powers at will, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *wall of fire*, *fireball* (3d6), *dispel magic*, *detect lie*, *detect magic*, *detect invisibility*, *ESP*, *know alignment*, *read magic*, *read languages*, *tongues*, *write*, *explosive runes*, *animate dead*, *sending* (to Asmodeus only), *teleport*, *identify*, *anti-magic shell*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Once per day Adramalech can unleash a *meteor swarm*, and once per day he can use a *symbol of insanity*. He causes *fear* by pointing at a creature within 4" and speaking (save vs. spell at -1 to avoid). He can *summon* 1-3 pit fiends (55% chance) or 1-6 malebranche (50% chance). Adramalech regenerates 1 hit point every round.

Description: Adramalech appears as an aged, gray-bearded and balding man, with cold, wet eyes that change hue from emerald green through black

to fiery orange depending upon his mood (enjoyment to fury, respectively). He has normal human feet and hands, small crimson barbed horns and a crimson forked tail. He wears loose, flowing robes of green, purple, russet, or black, and beneath these is a humanoid body that is crimson and scaly down the back, and yellow-green and slimy down the front.

PHONGOR (Inquisitor of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -1

MOVE: 16"

HIT DICE: 129 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 80%

TREASURE TYPE: Q(x2), Z

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +5*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 80%

INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: M (6' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 249

Attack/Defense modes: *All/all*

Phongor is the dreaded Inquisitor of Hell; he is responsible directly to Asmodeus for the provision of complete and accurate news of the hells and other planes. To do this, he has subverted the spies of Adramalech (so that they report first, and most fully, to him), enlisted spies of his own (and spies to watch his spies; he trusts no one), and perfected the arts of torture on devils, the lesser creatures of the hells, and intruders alike. Little escapes his arts, and "few return whole in body or mind from Phongor's gentle grasp," as it is said in the hells. In the depths of the palace of the Overlord, Phongor employs many delicate and brutal instruments of torture. While in the

palace, he will always have two pit fiends as bodyguards and 6-11 servant spined devils.

In battle Phongor can employ any weapon without "to hit" or damage penalties, but he favors his envenomed whip (see the listing for erinyes in the *Monster Manual* for effects of the venom). The weapon is a cat-of-nine-tails with tempered wire, rather than cord, as its strands. Each strand does 1-4 points base damage, and all nine strands are capable of striking the same target in the same round. Phongor himself can feel no pain, and thus is unaffected by attacks until physically disabled.

Phongor can use the following spell-like powers at will, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *fireball* (2d6), *lightning bolt* (2d6), *wall of fire*, *animate dead*, *dispel magic*, *detect lie*, *know alignment*, *ESP*, *tongues*, *detect invisibility*, *identify*, *sending* (to Asmodeus only), *teleport*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. By touch, Phongor can either *cause disease* (see DMG for diseases), *putrefy food & drink*, or attack with a *shocking grasp*. He can choose from these three effects freely and change between them without limit. Six times per day he can use a *symbol of pain*, and thrice a day he can *heal* himself or another (by touch). Once per day he can employ *true seeing* (lasts for 1-12 rounds, as he wills, but is ended immediately if he uses another of the above powers). Phongor radiates *fear* in a 4" radius at will (save at -2 to avoid; this power affects even devils below the rank of duke). He can *summon* 1-2 pit fiends (60% chance) or 1-6 spined devils (65% chance). Phongor regenerates 1 hit point per round.

Description: Phongor appears as a dead-white skinned man with glittering pink eyes, a hoarse, hissing voice, tiny horns and oily black hair, a forked tail, and red hooves. He wears open purple or black robes, and a belt to carry his whip.

BUER (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 22"

HIT DICE: 126 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 90%

TREASURE TYPE: H, Q(x4)

NO. OF ATTACKS: *See below*

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *See below*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (10' long)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 226

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Buer is a duke in the service of Asmodeus, commanding 15 companies of pit fiends. He is inclined to melancholy demeanor and, although always polite in speech, appears to delight in practical jokes. It should be remembered, however, that his words and actions are perfectly controlled, and are generally intended to further a specific aim or purpose. His loyalty to Asmodeus has never been questioned, and he keeps a careful eye on the whereabouts and activities of his forces.

Buer can use the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *flame arrow* (by touch), *animate dead*, *lightning bolt* (4d6), *dispel magic*, *fly*, *remove* (or *bestow*) *curse* (by touch), *find familiar* (for another; imps only), *cure* (or *cause*) *disease* (by touch), *detect invisibility*, *detect magic*, *know alignment*, *teleport*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Twice per day he can cause a *flame strike*, and once per day he can use a *symbol of hopelessness* or one of *discord*. He causes *fear* by his bellow (6" effective range; save vs. spell to avoid), and can summon 1-3

pit fiends (70% chance). Buer regenerates 2 hit points per round.

Description: Buer resembles a centaur (human torso with arms, horse's body) with gleaming silver skin and white hair. He has staring red eyes and red horns, and his four hooves are cloven and have crimson fetlocks. He wears a belt about his body, carrying a +2 mace and a +1 bow; the belt also carries four quivers (two on each side) containing 20 arrows each. He can *flame arrow* and fire such a shaft in one round, or fire two arrows, or strike twice with his mace.

From Buer's hips (that is, the upper portion of his back, just above the forelegs) protrude six 10'-long prehensile tentacles, which have no strength to grip but can flail at any opponents (up to six separate targets) within 1". Each tentacle slaps for 2-8 corrosive, stinging acidic damage per strike. Each tentacle can withstand 6 cumulative points of damage before being severed. Note that Buer will regenerate damage to these along with the rest of his body.

BUNE (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -3

MOVE: 12"/18"

HIT DICE: 136 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 90%

TREASURE TYPE: I, Q(x10), W, Z

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-5 or by weapon type +8

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (12' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 229

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Bune is a duke in the service of Asmodeus, commanding 30 companies of malebranche. He is greedy (fond of material wealth) and enjoys manipulating lesser beings of all sorts (including his warriors). His loyalty to Asmodeus is solid, but he is naturally "cheeky" to and defiant of all beings of whom he is scared (in other words, those stronger than himself). Asmodeus tolerates this because of all the dukes, Bune is the quickest and most careful in the execution of his orders. Bune is content with his position, sees Asmodeus as the most powerful archdevil and thus the safest lord, and will not betray him.

Bune can use the following spell-like powers at will, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *animate dead*, *dispel magic*, *detect invisibility*, *detect magic*, *tongues*, *locate object*, *flaming sphere*, *magic missile* (6 missiles per spell), *teleport*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Once per day Bune can cast a *cone of cold* (9d4 +9), once per day *heal* himself, and once per day use a *symbol of death*. Bune causes *fear* (save vs. spell at - 2 to avoid) by touch, and can *summon* 1-4 malebranche (70% chance of success) or a pit fiend (40% chance of success) to his aid. Bune regenerates 2 hit points per round.

Description: Bune appears as a malebranche, except that his scaled body is green in hue (coppery on the belly and loins), and his talons are silvery in color. Bune's head, however, is human—with doglike furry ears and a great griffonlike beak. His voice is high-pitched and lilting, although he will screech if he becomes infuriated, and he is an excellent mimic of other beings.

Bune fights with a saw-edged sword, shaped somewhat like a leaping flame (2-8 base damage), and a trident. He bears the sword and any treasure (in a pouch) by means of a belt, but rarely wears any other clothing. Bune's bite does 2-5 damage; if he is unarmed, his claws do 2-8 damage each, but he will snatch up a weapon at any opportunity.

MORAX (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -3

MOVE: 12"/16"

HIT DICE: 135 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 90%

TREASURE TYPE: H, I, Y

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 3-12/3-12

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 75%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (12' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 223

Attack/Defense Modes: All/all

Morax is a duke in the service of Asmodeus, leading nine companies of pit fiends. He is a being of few (and well-chosen) words, but exults in a good fight.

He often wrestles with the pit fiends under his command, hurling them about and roaring. He is respected by the pit fiends for his fairness to them and his loyalty to Asmodeus. He despises weakness, and is angered by creatures who bluff or presume to have a strength or station they do not possess or deserve. Morax respects Bifrons, Geryon, Asmodeus, and other physically strong devils, and has little time for "sneaks" or those who "hide behind magic" (for example, Phongor and Adramalech, in Nessus). Morax and Alastor are good friends, and will aid each other when one is in need, knowledge of the situation and opportunity permitting.

Morax can use the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *fireball* (2d6), *dispel magic*, *detect invisibility*, *detect magic*, *teleport*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Once per day he can cause *earthquake*, and once per

day use a *symbol of stunning*. He causes *fear* by touch (save vs. spell at -2 to avoid), and can *summon* 1-3 pit fiends (75% chance) at will. Morax regenerates 2 hit points per round.

Description: Morax is a cloven-hooved, humanoid devil. He has a bull-like head, with massive curved horns (somewhat like Moloch), batlike wings, and heavily muscled arms. He has a short forked tail. His entire body is a dark, dirty brown in hue, and his eyes are scarlet. He has a cluster of 2-inch-long spines on his chest, and in battle loves to hug victims against this cluster (piercing and crushing damage of 4-24 points per round). He prefers to fight by hurling two throwing axes and then closing with opponents to use his hands (3-12 each). If he wields a weapon (a rare thing), Morax does damage by weapon type +7.

RIMMON (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -4

MOVE: 9"

HIT DICE: 125 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 90%

TREASURE TYPE: Q(x6), R

NO. OF ATTACKS: 3

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-8/2-8/4-16

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (12' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 224

Attack/Defense Modes: All/all

Rimmon is a duke serving Asmodeus. He leads five companies of ice devils in battle, and appears as an ice devil with a handsome, human-like diabolic horned head. He is nasty and sarcastic and little liked

in the hells, but he is loyal to Asmodeus and has little personal pride.

Rimmon rarely fights with a trident, getting 2 attacks per round, one for weapon damage +6 and the other 4-16 for his tail. Unarmed, he does 2-8 damage with each set of claws plus 4-16 for his tail. Rimmon can use the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *fly*, *dispel magic*, *detect invisibility*, *detect magic*, *wall of ice*, *ice storm*, *cone of cold* (5d4 +5 damage), *lightning bolt* (4d6 damage), *teleport*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Twice per day he can unleash *chain lightning* (7d6), and once per day he can use a *symbol of pain*. Rimmon radiates *fear* in a 2" radius at will, has 60' infravision, and regenerates 2 hit points per round.

ZAGUM (Duke of Hell)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 12"

HIT DICE: 127 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 85%

TREASURE TYPE: C, P

NO. OF ATTACKS: 3

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 3-12/3-12/4-16

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (16' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 228

Attack/Defense Modes: All/all

Zagum is a duke serving Asmodeus, and commands 30 companies of barbed devils. He is ambitious and cold-blooded, but considers cruelty a self-indulgent waste of time, whereas humor (laughing with fellow

devils) pays dividends in terms of comradeship, mutual aid, respect, and cooperation. Therefore Zagum has a sense of humor, if a coarse one, and is constantly inventing jokes or stunts that amuse rather than harm.

Zagum can use the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *wall of fire*, *dispel magic*, *hold person*, *hold monster*, *fly*, *teleport*, and (fulfill another's limited) *wish*. Twice per day he can cause a *flame strike*, and once per day employ a *symbol of pain*. He causes *fear* by gaze (1" effective range, save vs. spell at -2 to avoid), and can *summon* 1-4 barbed devils (75% chance of success) as desired. Zagum regenerates 2 hit points per round.

Description: Zagum appears as a gigantic barbed devil, with a long (15') tail and a jagged row of barbed spines running up his back, culminating in a bony collar edged with spines at the back and sides of his head. His scaled skin is crimson in hue, his eyes yellow with black pupils.

Spells in the hells

There is much more to be done before the Nine Hells are truly playable. As another step in that direction, the remainder of this presentation is devoted to some suggested spell alterations (that is, differences in the performance of spells on the Prime Material Plane compared to the plane in question), primarily for the plane of Avernus. (*Editor's note: Frank Mentzer, one of the resident rule experts on the AD&D™ game at TSR Hobbies, Inc., responded to our request for additional help by offering some additions and suggested corrections to the author's spell list. We have used [square brackets] to set off Frank's remarks from Ed Greenwood's original material.*)

The defensive strategy of the Nine Hells is to confine all entries to this plane, so that hostile or unauthorized visitors can be dealt with on Avernus and not in the realms of any of the archdevils. If an attacker is strong, the archdevils merely send more and more of their armies (who, given an archdevil's

authorization, can move freely about the hells) to Avernus, into the fray, until the foe is overwhelmed. If this strategy works, further details of the rest of the Nine Hells may never be necessary.

Magic alterations

The Nine Hells are environments very different from the Prime Material Plane. The archdevils have, over a span of time far beyond man's ken, twisted facets of the nature of the hells to their own ends, resulting in magical conditions forbidding to intruders. As a rule of thumb, spell casters entering the Nine Hells will find that they cannot contact or summon creatures from other planes; cannot control fauna, flora, or weather; and in particular they will face many creatures (the devils) that are immune to the effects of most mind- and control-related spells.

Clerics and druids cannot regain spells above 2nd level, once cast, and the effects of many spells and even magical items are altered. A *protection from devils* scroll, for instance, would be ineffective if read in the hells. [A scroll of *protection from devils* would still have effect, but only that of a "normal" *protection from evil*, 10' radius spell effect. Partial reading gives the -2 penalty to attacks of, and the +2 bonus to the saving throws of the defenders from, the given type of devil (3, 7, or 10 segments to affect lesser, greater, or all devils, respectively). However, contact with any magic-resistant creature might cause the protection to vanish (normal MR check applies).]

Suggested spell alterations are given below, including those for spells published in earlier issues of *Dragon*® magazine, either from E. Gary Gyga's column, *From the Sorcerer's Scroll*, or Len Lakofka's column, *Leomund's Tiny Hut*. Note that new spells published after issue 69 of *Dragon* magazine are unknown to me as of this writing, and hence are not covered. These alterations (and those of magical items and character abilities, detailed hereafter) are of necessity incomplete: few are eager to learn such

alterations the hard way, by experimentation in the hells, and few who do learn return to tell the tale.

Spells are listed by class, and within each character class by ascending level, alphabetically by name within each level. "X" equals "ineffective."

Cleric spells

Command: Ineffective against greater devils.

Detect evil: Evil is so overwhelming that this spell can only be used negatively; i.e., to detect the absence of evil in a specific object or creature.

[*Light* and *continual light* spells have areas of effect of half normal size and intensity, and may attract wandering residents of the plane, if any (1 in 6 chance, check per turn).]

Protection from evil: X

Protection from good: Effects of double strength.

[*Purify food & drink:* X]

Sanctuary: Ineffective versus archdevils; other creatures attacking caster gain a +2 bonus on saves vs. spell.

Chant: X

Holy symbol: Ineffective, and any attempt to cast will draw the nearest devil to the place of casting, quickly.

Messenger: X

Dust devil: X

Enthrall: X

Prayer: X

[*Speak with dead:* X]

Abjure/implore: Both forms ineffective.

Ceremony, consecrate ground: X

Divination: X

Negative plane protection: X

Protection from evil, 10' radius: X [Note that a paladin's radiant *protection* effect (and that of any other creature connected to the Positive Material Plane)

is merely reduced from 10' radius to personal effect only.]

Protection from good, 10' radius: Effects of double strength.

Atonement: X

Commune: X [Commune, aerial servant, conjure animals, and other spells involving direct contact with another plane might work, depending on the power of the being contacted and the actual plane of the Nine Hells on which the spell is cast. If on the outermost (or first, or highest, or closest to the Inner Planes), all such spells will work properly. A demigod can be contacted on the second plane "down"; a lesser god, the third; and a greater god, five planes "down." No contact of any sort can be made from the 6th-9th planes of the Nine Hells unless permission is given from the ruler of the plane.]

Dispel evil: X

Flame strike: X

Insect plague: X

Quest: X

Raise dead: X

Aerial servant: X [See commune.]

Conjure animals: X [See commune.]

Find the path: X

[Word of recall: Will only work from the 1st-6th planes; the 7th-9th planes are too far removed.]

[Astral spell: Will only work from the 1st of the Nine Hells.]

Control weather: X

Earthquake: X

Exaction: Ineffective versus devils.

[Gate: Affects deities in limited fashion, as per commune (see above).]

Henley's digit of disruption: Ineffective, but caster will know this upon thinking of the spell, prior to casting.

Holy word: Ineffective. (Unholy word will be effective only if caster worships one of the archdevils, and then only against lesser devils.)

Resurrection: X

Druid spells

Entangle: X

Predict weather: X

[Purify water: X]

Heat metal: Functions normally, but note that devils suffer no damage from the "hot" version and only half damage from the cold version.

[Obscurement: Half normal dimensions, 1/8 normal volume (1/2" cube/level).]

[Call lightning: X]

Plant growth: X

Summon insects: X

Animal summoning I: X

Call woodland beings: X

Hold plant: Plants native to the hells save vs. the spell at +2.

Animal growth (or reduction): X

Animal summoning II: X

Commune with nature: X

Insect plague: X

Animal summoning III: X

Conjure fire elemental: X [Conjure elemental (fire or earth) works from Avernus only.]

[Feeblemind: Treat all devils as if human clerics (+1 to save).]

Weather summoning: X

Chariot of Sustarre: This spell is effective on Avernus, but not when cast on any of the other hells.

Confusion: Ineffective versus greater devils; lesser devils save vs. spell at normal, not at -2.

Conjure earth elemental: X [But see conjure fire elemental above.]

Control weather: X

Creeping doom: X

[Finger of death: Ineffective against any devil.]

[Reincarnation: X]

Magic-user spells

Cantrips—Bee: X; Bug: X; Change: ineffective vs. creatures native to the hells; Gnats: X; Mouse: X; Spider: X; Yawn: ineffective vs. creatures native to the hells.

Find familiar: Will work only if cast by a lawful evil or neutral evil magic-user; only imps can be summoned in the hells.

[Light and continual light: See note under cleric spells.]

Melt: Ice devils are not affected by this spell, suffering no damage.

Mount: X

Precipitation: X

Protection from evil: X

Protection from good: Effects will be of double strength.

Taunt: X

Detect evil: See note under cleric spells.

Forget: Ineffective against all devils.

[Invisibility (all sorts): The DM must remember to check each devil's chance of detecting invisibility (as applicable), based on intelligence and hit dice (DMG p. 60). Thus, any form of invisibility is often ineffective against archdevils.]

Invitation: ineffective against devils

[Rope trick: The "extra-dimensional space" will be on an adjacent level of the hells, and may invite unexpected visitors (cf. gate).]

Scare: X

[*Shatter*: Will not affect a devil's talisman.]

Tasha's uncontrollable hideous laughter: Ineffective versus greater devils.

Cloudburst: X

Material: X

Monster summoning I: X

Protection from evil 10' radius: X

Protection from good 10' radius: Effects will be of double strength.

Sepia snake sigil: Will always miss devils of any sort.

Charm monster: Ineffective versus greater devils; lesser devils save at +2.

Fear: Ineffective versus undead, devils.

Fire charm: Ineffective versus greater devils.

Monster summoning II: X

Plant growth: X

[*Wall of ice*: Duration is but 1 round per level in most warm areas of the hells.]

Avoidance: Ineffective versus the apparel or possessions on the person of a devil.

Conjure elemental: X [See note under druid spell *conjure fire elemental*.]

Contact other plane: Effective only to other planes within the hells. [Ignore the "elemental" line in the spell description, calculating all distances as needed.]

Dismissal: Effective in the normal manner, but its reverse, *beckon*, will never succeed in summoning a creature from any plane but one of the other hells.

Distance distortion: X

Dolor: Ineffective versus devils and other creatures native to the hells. Nothing will happen when it is cast; the target devil will not charm and dominate the caster.

[*Feeblemind*: See note under the druid spell of the same name.]

Leomund's lamentable belabourment: Ineffective versus devils.

Leomund's secret chest: The chest can be summoned on Avernus, but not on any of the other hells, and in no case will a living creature of any sort enter the hells via such a chest.

Magic jar: Ineffective versus greater devils.

Monster summoning III: X

[*Wall of iron* or *wall of stone*: These effects have a duration of 1 turn per level of the caster.]

Control weather: X

[*Death spell*: Ineffective against any devil.]

Ensnarement: X

Geas: Ineffective versus devils.

Invisible stalker: X [See note under the cleric spell *commune*.]

Monster summoning IV: X

[*Reincarnation*: X]

Spiritwrack: Only effective versus devils (demons cannot be contacted from the hells), and casting it will attract any greater and archdevils on the plane of casting to the location of the caster, within 1 turn.

Transmute water to dust: The waters of marshy areas in the upper hells (e.g., Minauros) will be affected by this spell, but the river Lethe and the waters of the swamp and ocean of Stygia will not.

Banishment: Note that a devil cannot be forced "back" to "its own" other plane of the hells; this spell can banish other creatures from the hells, but cannot force creatures native to the hells from one level to another.

Cacodemon: X

Charm plants: X [Permits communication only, not charm.]

Limited wish: Devils are in no way affected by a *limited wish* cast in the hells. Creatures may leave, but not enter or be summoned to, the hells by means of a *limited wish*. Such a spell cannot be used to contact a deity or a deity's servants except an archdevil or servants, nor to gain spells from that deity or servants.

Monster summoning V: X

Teleport without error: This can be used to enter or leave the hells, but the chance of error in any case rises by 21%.

Torment: Any unfortunate spell caster undertaking such a spell will soon learn that, in the hells, no devil can be bound in a magic circle, thaumaturgic triangle, pentagram, or other drawn boundary. (Protective circles will keep some devils at bay, however, and physical barriers or prisons, such as a *forcecage*, can contain most devils.)

Truename: It is worth noting with respect to this spell that no archdevil's true name is known to other devils (except perhaps Asmodeus; if this were not so, the devil in question would not retain his or her position for long), and as a rule, only archdevils know the names of other devils (typically only a few loyal to them, for they would act quickly to bring about the downfall of an enemy, by means not available to casters of this spell). Devils do not bargain *with* the true names of other devils, although they may bargain *for* such names. The *sending* portion of the spell will work as a means of delivering willing creatures from the hells to other, safer planes, or as a means of transport within the hells.

[*Vanish*: If the object is of greater bulk than the given limit, the object is not replaced by stone, but is instead entirely unaffected.]

[*Antipathy/sympathy*: Any devil on its home plane is unaffected.]

Binding: See *torment*, above.

Demand: Ineffective versus devils.

Mass charm: Ineffective versus greater devils.

[*Maze*: The "extra-dimensional space" is 3 planes removed at best, and may (depending on the level of the hells on which it is cast) have an effect similar to *rope trick* or *gate*.]

Monster summoning VI: X

Sink: Greater devils are unaffected by this spell. Other creatures of the hells are allowed the usual saving throw.

Symbol: Ineffective versus greater devils.

[Trap the soul: Ineffective against archdevils.]

Energy drain: Ineffective in the hells. When the spell is called to mind (the concentration just prior to casting begun), the caster will realize that the spell will not work—and if spellcasting is not undertaken, the spell will not be lost.

Imprisonment: [Ineffective against archdevils, but will place any other devil into *temporal stasis* until dispelled (and note that a standard magic-resistance check applies).] The reverse of the spell will not cause any creatures to appear.

Monster summoning VII: X

Wish: See *limited wish*, above; conditions are identical except that a *wish* may affect lesser devils.

Illusionist spells

[Hypnotism: Ineffective against all devils.]

[Light and continual light: See note under cleric spells.]

Spook: Ineffective on creatures native to the hells.

[Wall of fog: Half normal dimensions, 1/8 normal value.]

Fascinate: X

Hypnotic pattern: Ineffective versus all devils.

[Invisibility (all forms): See note under magic-user spells.]

[Illusionary script: Ineffective against greater devils.]

[Paralyzation: Note that a paralyzed devil can still perform “at will” abilities, including *teleport*.]

Confusion: Ineffective vs. greater devils; lesser devils save vs. spell at par, not at -2.

[Emotion: Ineffective against greater devils.]

[Minor creation: Half normal duration, or 1/10 normal duration when on the 7th–9th planes of the hells.]

Phantasmal killer: Ineffective versus greater devils.

[Shadow monsters: All have half the given hit points, and inflict half the given damage against victims who make their saving throws, due to the remote position of the hells with respect to the Plane of Shadow.]

Solid fog: Does not reduce the movement of creatures native to the hells.

Chaos: X

[Demi-shadow monsters: See *shadow monsters* above.]

[Major creation: Half normal duration, or 1/10 normal duration when on the 7th–9th planes of the hells.]

Maze: [See note under magic-user spell of the same name.]

[Shadow door: The invisibility is ineffective against archdevils.]

[Shadow magic: Victims failing their saving throws take only half normal damage.]

[Summon shadow: X]

Conjure animals: X

[Demi-shadow magic: See *shadow magic* above.]

[Mass suggestion: Ineffective against archdevils.]

[Permanent illusion: Lasts only 3 minutes after concentration ends.]

[Shades: See *shadow monsters* above.]

Alter reality: Devils are in no way affected by an *alter reality* cast in the hells; the conditions limiting the spell are identical to those on the magic-user spell *limited wish* (see above).

[Astral spell: See note under cleric spell of the same name.]

Shadow walk: X

Vision: X [Works normally on the first of the Nine Hells.]

Weird: Ineffective versus greater devils; lesser devils save at +3; ineffective versus undead.

(Note that in this list, the term “greater devil” includes archdevils unless the two terms are used separately in the same entry.)

[General note on limited and full *wishes*: The ruler of any plane of existence (including the Nine Hells) has full and final “veto power” over any *wish* cast within its/his/her territorial jurisdiction. This power might or might not be exercised with any given *wish*, depending on the nature of the ruler and the *wish*. However, the exceedingly lawful nature of the hells is such that the ruler will immediately know of any and all such attempts, and will immediately (in all but exceptional circumstances) cancel, modify, or grant the effects, quite possibly arriving in person (with all appropriate guards and assistants) to adjudicate the matter.]

Magic item alterations

Potion of fire resistance: Effective against the natural fires of the hells and those magically produced by creatures such as nightmares, up to and including malebranche—but, the potion seems ineffective against the fiery magics of pit fiends and all greater unique devils. (A *ring of fire resistance* seems strong enough to protect against such powerful magical fires.)

Potion of gaseous form: An adventurer using such a potion exploded when struck by a firewind, while fleeing across the rifts of Nessus. Companions of the lost one say the firewind appeared drawn to the gas.

Oil of etherealness: [No effect.] Ethereal individuals are apparently not invisible in the hells.

Potion of treasure finding: Apparently ineffective in palaces and caves of the Nine Hells.

Ring of djinni summoning: The djinni will not feel its summons, nor appear, if such a ring is rubbed when in the hells; its operation is suspended.

Ring of elemental command: Such a ring is inoperative in the hells, and none of its effects or properties (including saving throw penalties) will be effective.

Ring of fire resistance: See *potion of fire resistance*, above.

Ring of human influence: All devils, even if in human or humanoid form, are totally unaffected by such a ring.

Ring of multiple wishes: Any wishes that affect any greater or archdevil (other than to free the speaker or a stated creature from the physical grasp or confinement of such a being) are beyond the power of the magic of the item. Requests involving exit from the hells will be granted, as will wishes involving travel from place to place within the hells, but such travel will not extend to captive devils or other creatures of lawful evil alignment, and may not operate to the precise destination requested.

Ring of three wishes: See *ring of multiple wishes*. For limited wish items, see that spell under the above list of spell alterations.

Ring of water walking: This item will operate in the marshes of Minauros and probably elsewhere in the hells as well, but demonstrably does not function with respect to Lethe, the River of Forgetfulness, on Nessus.

Rod of beguiling: [Ineffective against all residents on their home planes.]

[Rod of lordly might: In the first hell (Avernus), the battle axe effect is +2, the spear +1, and other weapon effects are non-magical. Deductions apply for planes further removed. All mechanical effects work normally.]

Rod of resurrection: This item will not function properly in the hells. If its employment is attempted, charges will be drained in the usual manner, but the rod will only *animate dead*—“raising” a mindless, undead zombie which will obey anyone bearing the rod. The zombie is subject to the usual damage and continuing decay while animated, and if removed

from the hells to another plane, will revert to an inanimate, lifeless corpse.

Rod of rulership: Such rulership is ineffective against hellcats and all devils.

[Rod of smiting: Acts as a +1 weapon in the first hell, and non-magical on planes further removed; however, one charge is still used on a roll of 20, and triple normal damage is still inflicted thereby (if the victim can be damaged by normal weapons).]

Staff of command: Ineffective in the hells.

Staff of the magi: *Protection from evil* power ineffective, *protection from good* of double strength. *Plane travel* power is unaffected, but *conjure elemental* function will be ineffective. The *retributive strike* power is unaffected, and has operated most efficiently in the hells! [For *staff of the magi* and *staff of power*, see notes on spell alterations for *light*, *invisibility*, etc.]

Staff of the serpent: Hell hounds, hellcats, and all devils are immune to the poison of the adder version.

[Staff of striking: Acts as a +1 weapon in the first hell, and non-magical on planes further removed; however, charges still double or triple normal damage (if the victim can be damaged by normal weapons).]

Staff of withering: Ineffective in the hells (refer to DMG).

Wand of conjuration: The *monster summoning* function will be ineffective, but charges will be drained—and lost—in the usual manner when this power is called upon.

Wand of enemy detection: Ineffective in the hells.

Wand of fear: Ineffective in the hells.

Wand of magic detection: Ineffective in the hells.

Wand of metal and mineral detection: Ineffective in the hells.

[Wand of wonder: No effect if heavy ruin, *summon*, or *create* any creature, plant, or object (rhino, butterfly, grass, et al.) is indicated; only certain spell effects will be produced.]

Arrow of direction: Ineffective; it will fall in random directions when used in the hells, although this may not be immediately evident to the user.

Bag of beans: The soil and water of the hells cannot cause such beans to sprout. They retain, however, their explosive property.

Bag of devouring: A *bag of devouring* will never be found in the hells, and will not enter them; it will disappear (along with any contents) instantaneously if its bearer enters any of the hells.

Book of exalted deeds: Cannot be touched by lesser devils, against whom it functions as though it were a *protection from evil* of 20' radius, and if any such approach to 10' distant, they take 2-12 electrical damage (no save), and are *repulsed*. This applies also to non-diabolic creatures of the hells. Greater devils take 1-6 damage per contact, and are (save at +1) *confused* (75%), *slowed* (20%), or both (5%) for 1-4 rounds at every contact with such a book. Archdevils take 2-4 points of damage upon touching such a book, and their touch destroys it.

Bowl commanding water elementals: Ineffective in the hells.

Bowl of watery death: Will function normally in the hells. A tiny, drowned magic-user will turn into a lemure of normal size if still in the hells after 60 turns have elapsed.

Brazier commanding fire elementals: Ineffective in the hells.

Brazier of sleep smoke: When a fire is lit in such a brazier when in the hells, clouds of billowing smoke will pour forth, but it has no sleep effects, and no fire elemental will appear. The smoke will dissipate, and the fire go out, in 2-6 rounds.

Censer controlling air elementals: Ineffective in the hells.

Censer of summoning hostile air elementals: Ineffective in the hells.

Crystal ball: If used while in the hells, the chance of locating a subject within the Nine Hells is normal; i.e.

as given in the *DMG* (note that from one level of the hells to another is to another plane, and subject to a -25% penalty). Archdevils will always (100%) feel the view-presence of a scrying entity, knowing its direction and approximate distance after 1-4 rounds of observation, if on the same plane, and knowing the plane after 3-12 continuous rounds of observation if the observer is on another plane. If a crystal ball is employed in the hells to observe things on other planes outside of the hells, there is a penalty of -33% on locating a subject (but only -24% if the subject is on the Prime Material Plane).

Crystal hypnosis ball: If a magic-user should employ a ball controlled by an archdevil (and most archdevils place four to twelve or so on the Prime Material Plane to further their own ends and to observe events) while in the hells, the *suggestion* employed immediately will be to travel to (or move toward) the location of (or the plane of) the controlling archdevil. Rarely (and only if the controlled individual's party is strong), the devil may compel the individual to undertake a mission in the hells, typically stealing from or spying on a rival archdevil. If a *crystal hypnosis ball* controlled by a being not in the hells is employed by a magic-user in the hells, nothing will occur; the crystal ball will seem only a non-magical sphere of glassy crystal, although it will still radiate a detectable dweomer.

Deck of many things: Plaques drawn in the hells will have normal effects except for the following: *knight* will arrive by means of *plane shift* in 1-3 rounds, bewildered but fully armed and armored, fresh and at full hit points—and will immediately recognize the character he wishes to follow. *Flames* will cause the devil (DM's choice as to identity, but it will be a devil somewhere in the hells at the time the card is drawn) to immediately see the character who has drawn the card, and know the precise location of the character at that time. If *balance* is drawn and the character's new alignment is lawful evil, betrayal of the party in

such a way as to gain the most status for the newly lawful evil character will be the ultimate result.

Eyes of charming: *Charm* powers are not effective versus devils or other monsters; the eyes enable the wearer to *charm person* only.

Helm of teleportation: This item will function properly in the hells, but there is a 33% chance that the destination reached will be slightly different than that intended—i.e., a *teleport* into an infernal palace might deposit one outside the gates. Inter-planar travel (i.e. into another level of the hells) is of course not possible. This “shift” phenomenon does not appear to affect the spell *teleport* (but evidence available to date is fragmentary), and in any case the “shift” effect is entirely separate from the vertical-error risk of teleportation.

Horn of the Tritons: Ineffective if winded in the hells.

Horn of Valhalla: Will be effective if winded in the hells, and any berserkers appearing will fight any devils within view before turning on the horn-blower, if there is any class or alignment conflict. The berserkers will vanish in 6 turns (although few will survive that long if called into direct combat with devils).

Instrument of the bards: See *bards* under *character ability alterations*, below.

Iron flask: Any devil or rakshasa released from such a flask will immediately know where it is and will seek to summon or attract the attention of infernal aid to defeat the individual releasing it and any companions.

Pipes of the sewers: Rats are present in the hells in only two places: the dungeons beneath the iron city of Dis, and in the garbage-choked towers of Malagard. Only when the *pipes* are played in these places will rats appear.

Robe of eyes: The tracking ability of such a robe is ineffective in the hells, but otherwise it functions normally.

Scarab of enraging enemies: Greater devils and archdevils are immune to the effects of this item.

Sphere of annihilation: Such phenomena are never found in the hells, and cannot be magically plane shifted or otherwise made to enter the infernal regions.

Stone of controlling earth elementals: Ineffective in the hells.

Talisman of pure good: In the hells, this item will not function normally: evil clerics (or evil creatures of any sort) will not be swallowed up in a flaming chasm. Such a *talisman* has a marked effect on all vile creatures in the hells (including devils); the touch of one (“to hit” roll required) will do any such creature 12-48 points of damage (no saving throw), and drain 1 charge. If its charges are exhausted in the hells, such a talisman will darken, shrivel, and crumble.

Talisman of ultimate evil: Will function normally in the hells, but will not lose any charges, regardless of the number of uses to which it is put. Devils will not have or know how to use such talismans.

Trident of fish command: Any aquatic life to be found in the hells (i.e., in the swamp or ocean of Stygia or the river Lethe) is unaffected by such a trident.

[General note on magic items: For items constructed on the Prime Material Plane, all magic weapon “plusses” are dropped by 2 on the first of the Nine Hells (Avernus), and by 1 more for each plane further removed.]

Note regarding artifacts and relics: All such items function normally in the hells. It is most unlikely that artifacts or relics of any sort will be found in the hells. If there are any such, items dedicated to “good” will not be found among them, and they will lie within the walls of the archdevils’ fortresses—not lost or “forgotten” for a character to happen upon.

Character ability alterations

Combat

Note that a +2 (at least) or better magic weapon is required to physically hit any unique devil or arch-devil, including the nobility of hell and the outcast devils. DMs should also remember that fire of any sort has no effect on devils or any other creature native to the hells.

Archery: Use of this skill (by any character proficient in it) is impossible on the plane of Dis, save within Dispater's palace itself, or underground (due to the winds), and also impossible in the central rifts of Nessus (due to the firewinds). It can otherwise be exercised normally, although volcanic activity on Phlegethos, and fireball formation on Avernus, may destroy the occasional missile.

Infravision: For elves, half-elves, spell casters employing such a spell, and other creatures while in Phlegethos, Malbolge, and Maladomini, there is too much background heat in all surroundings for *infravision* to detect anything more than cold or cool spell effects, objects, etc., (and these soon warm from contact with the surroundings).

Psionics

Psionic processes function with only minor modifications in the hells. Psionic combat is unaffected.

Animal telepathy: All creatures native to the hells are considered "monsters" as far as this ability is concerned.

Body equilibrium: Anyone walking upon the water of the river Lethe (or for that matter, the rivers of fire in Phlegethos, or the lake of Cocytus) will be subject to the natural effects described in the text of this article. Note that use of this discipline will not prevent Cocytus from swallowing a psionic character—that action is a physical, attacking action and not a matter of the ice giving way and closing over someone who has fallen.

Detection of good/evil: The overwhelming evil of the hells so pervades everything a psionic character concentrates on that good creatures are easier to distinguish (+33% chance), good objects slightly so (+10%), and evil creatures or objects do not betray their potency or power by their auras, nor their precise (lawful, chaotic, neutral) evil alignment.

Domination: This ability functions normally in the hells, but archdevils and greater devils are immune.

ESP: The thoughts of devils will be meaningless unless the psionic recipient is conversant with Mabrahoring, the language of the hells. The minds of archdevils and greater devils are not "unshielded"; they cannot be "read" by this means.

Hypnosis: Devils of all sorts are immune to this mental power.

Invisibility: Archdevils have minds of too great power to be affected by psionic *invisibility*, but they will not always immediately realize that the psionic character is invisible to others.

Molecular agitation: Devils are immune to both heat and fire damage effects.

Sensitivity to psychic impressions: Any psionic character foolish enough to exercise this discipline in the hells will quickly (within 1 round) be overwhelmed by the cumulative violent emotions and horrific visions of the many lemures, tormented souls, and evil deeds done here. The effects are as follows: The psionic must save vs. death magic or be driven insane (melancholia, megalomania, mania, manic-depressive, hallucinatory insanity, homicidal mania, hebephrenia, suicidal mania, or catatonia; see DMG). A psionic character who successfully saves will fall unconscious for 1–2 rounds, and thereafter be confused for 1–4 rounds. (Psionic individuals who are evil by nature save at +2.)

Mass domination: Ineffective versus archdevils and greater devils.

Molecular rearrangement: Any metals contained in diabolical magic items, such as the fork of

Mephistopheles, will not be affected by this psionic power; nor will its use affect the powers of such items.

Telepathic projection: Ineffective versus all devils.

Teleportation: There is a 33% chance that an intended destination will not be reached (see *helm of teleporation* under *Magic item alterations*, above). Note that this is different from mis-teleporting (i.e. low or high), which can also occur (normal probabilities and means of psychic prevention prevail).

Clerics

No cleric, regardless of alignment or deity, can turn away or command into service any devil while in the hells. Undead, etc., will be affected normally.

Druids

The flora, fauna, and weather of the hells, as mentioned under the list of spell alterations above, are largely immune from magical influence and control. Druid abilities gained at third and seventh levels (refer to the *Players Handbook*) are unaffected.

Paladins

The *detect evil* ability of this class will prove sensitive enough to distinguish powerfully evil beings and items from the surroundings, although all things native to the hells will display their evil nature to the paladin. Paladins may not affect devils while in the hells (see cleric section, above) although this power versus undead and the like is unaffected. A *warhorse* cannot be called while in the hells, if it is not taken to the hells with the paladin; note that such steeds will be trembling with fear at all times it is in the infernal regions, and if menaced by devils and/or not constantly reassured and commanded to stay close by its master, will bolt in fear (and likely be lost) when faced by the diabolic. A paladin's *protection from evil* does not operate in the hells, except as a white, *continual light*-like radiance enveloping the paladin, retaining only the +2 saving throw bonus.

Rangers

The tracking ability of rangers is entirely lost while in the hells.

Thieves

Hiding in shadows is normally impossible with respect to devils and other creatures of the hells; for game purposes assume a base penalty of -33% to the chance, further modified by the DM for circumstances. *Climb walls* is often modified in the hells for conditions: smooth iron walls, such as those of the city of Dis and Mephistar, subtract 20% from the ability to successfully climb them; if heavily rusted, the DM may add another -15% penalty to simulate the chance of the entire wall collapsing or breaking away under the weight of the climber. The treacherous alpine and glacial ice of Stygia and Caina subtract 33% from the thief's chance to climb them successfully. A *spider climb* spell employed by a thief or other character will overcome such penalties, and have its normal effect.

Assassins

Refer to thief functions, above; assassins are subject to the same modifications. A *disguise* in which the assassin appears to be a devil will not fool any devil.

Monks

Refer to thief functions, above; monks are subject to the same modifications. A *quivering palm* attack cannot affect any devil (and remember, creatures only hit by magical weapons are unaffected).

Bards

Archdevils and greater devils are immune to the charming (*suggestion*) powers of a bard, even when augmented by a magical instrument of the bards. All other properties of bards and bardic instruments will function normally, with the following exceptions for abilities that are ineffective for certain instruments: Fochlucan Bandore, *entangle*; Doss Lute, *hold animal*; Cli Lyre, *control winds*; Anstruth Harp, *weather summoning*; Ollamh Harp, *control weather*.

Barbarians

The following barbarian skills are affected while in the hells: *tracking* (as with rangers); *animal training* (ineffective versus all animals native to the hells); *outdoor crafts*; and *survival*. The DM should rule carefully on what facets, if any, of outdoor crafts and survival become effective after a month's existence—which is no small feat—in the initially alien environment of the hells.

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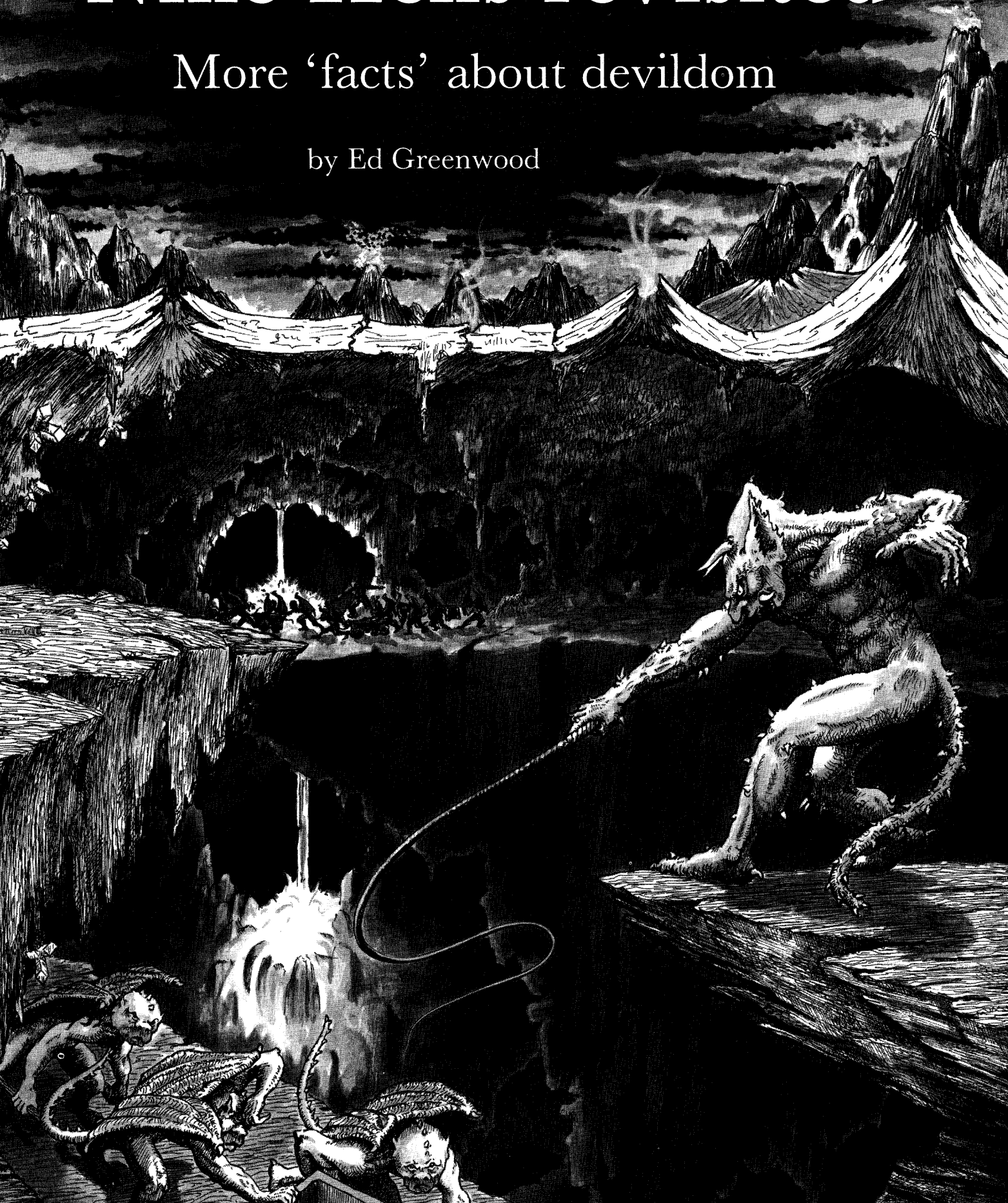


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Nine Hells revisited

More 'facts' about devildom

by Ed Greenwood



Research into the nature and affairs of the diabolic, particularly those specialized investigations that can be carried out only in the Nine Hells, is understandably perilous. Much is yet unknown, or is largely conjecture; here follows more information about devils and their doings, and the Nine Hells, gathered from many scattered sources.

(Editor's note: This article is designed to be used in conjunction with Ed Greenwood's earlier treatise on the Nine Hells, which was printed in issues #75 and #76 of DRAGON® Magazine. However, readers who do not have immediate access to those issues will find that much of what follows here can be used without the earlier information. Issues #75 and #76 are available by mail order; see the list of back issues and order form elsewhere in this magazine.)

Dealing with devils

On the Prime Material Plane, there have always been creatures of all sorts, including men, who worship and/or serve devils. To ensure the survival of these agents (and with them, diabolic influence on the Prime Material Plane), devils have always aided (by "serving under duress") these agents under a detailed code of laws and behavior.

Knowledge of these laws and behavior — in practical terms, the summoning and control of devils, and of their sigils and talismans — has survived down through the ages outside the ranks of diabolic agents, despite the unceasing efforts of devils and their agents to eradicate it. Fear of diabolic attack, and of the possible actions of other beings seeking such knowledge, has kept the identities of the possessors of diabolic knowledge, and the knowledge itself, secret. One can be sure (DMs take note) that player characters' discovery of such knowledge in play, if revealed or communicated to anyone who is not a player character, will bring eventual diabolic attack upon the PCs. Tutors or temples will not knowingly accept talismans and summoning information as gifts or payment for services. If such are unwittingly accepted, it is extremely likely that the tutor or temple will shortly thereafter be destroyed. Note that (according to the official AD&D® rules) the mere handling of, or speaking of any inscriptions on, a talisman will bring immediate response. Devils, or any specific devil linked to the talisman, will appear from the hells within 1-4 rounds — and without specific knowledge of how to control such *summoned* devils, the summoner is at their (non-existent!) mercy. It must be emphasized that the inscriptions on talismans are never the truenames of devils, and do not give the speaker any power over the *summoned* devils.

The protected (the word "safe" can never be truthfully used) storage of diabolic talismans is another topic upon which lore is fragmentary and largely silent. The long-

ago wizard Enthor mentions in his writings a fellow mage who stored a talisman in a silver box, its seams sealed with wax wet with holy water; indeed, silver and holy water would seem ideal physical components of any protection (along with locks and traps to prevent uncontrolled access to the storage-place of the talisman). But magic — strong magic — must also form a part of such defenses, and of this, nothing survives in known writings.

Diabolic names

Many sages, diabolic agents, and others who have dealt with devils have repeatedly emphasized the importance of correctly pronouncing the common name of any devil in all diabolic dealings, for the vanity of a devil is a powerful and dangerous thing. Again, it should be noted that the names by which all devils are commonly known are *not* truenames; use of such common names will often *summon* the being concerned from the hells, but the devil will not be under the control of the speaker unless other magical preparations have been made. Here follow what are generally agreed to be the correct pronunciations of the more difficult or lesser-known common names of the known hierarchy of the hells, with accented syllables printed in *italic* type:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>
Adonides	Ah- don- <i>eed</i> s
Adramalech	Ah- drama- <i>leckh</i>
Agares	Ah- <i>garr</i> -aiys
Amduscias	Am- <i>doo</i> -see - azse
Amon	<i>Aiy</i> - mon
Arioch	<i>Air</i> - ee - okh
Baalberith	<i>Bahl</i> - bair - ith
Baalphegor	<i>Bahl</i> - feh - gor
Baalzebul	<i>Bahl</i> - zee - bull
Baalzephon	<i>Bahl</i> - zee - fonn
Bael	<i>Bay</i> -ul
Barbatos	<i>Bahr</i> -bah- toss
Bele	<i>Beel</i>
Bifrons	<i>Bye</i> - frons
Bileth	<i>Bye</i> -leth
Caarcinolaas	Kar- <i>crin</i> - oh - lass
Chamo	<i>Chamm</i> - oh
Dispatar	Diss- <i>pay</i> -ter
Fecor	<i>Fee</i> - kor
Goap	Goe - <i>app</i>
Herobaal	<i>Hair</i> - oh - bahl
Herodias	<i>Hair</i> - oh - dee - ass
Hutijin	<i>Hutt</i> - ih - jinn
Machalas	Mah - <i>shall</i> - ass
Melchon	<i>Mell</i> - khon
Merodach	Mare - oh - dakh
Naome	<i>Nay</i> - ohm
Tartach	Tarr - <i>tackh</i>
Titivilus	Tih - tee - <i>vie</i> - luss

More "outcast" devils

Described in the following section of text are nine unique devils who, for one reason or another, have been relieved of their former position or status and exiled to Avernus, the uppermost plane of the Nine

Hells. As such, one or more of them might well be encountered by a party of adventurers who have traversed the Astral Plane and emerged on Avernus — generally the first (and often the last) stop for those who would visit the hells and meet the devils on their own ground.

ARMAROS (Greater Devil)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*
 NO. APPEARING: 1
 ARMOR CLASS: -1
 MOVE: 14"/20"
 HIT DICE: 99 *hit points*
 % IN LAIR: *Nil*
 TREASURE TYPE: *See below*
 NO. OF ATTACKS: 1
 DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +4*
 SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*
 SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*
 MAGIC RESISTANCE: 90%
 INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*
 ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*
 SIZE: L (12' tall, 26' wingspan)
 PSIONIC ABILITY: 226
 Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Armaros, sometimes called "The Resolver of Enchantments," is the least unhappy of the devils cast out of the present hierarchy of the hells, for his sojourn on Avernus is largely a matter of politics and not punishment, and he is often visited by Asmodeus or certain of the Overlord's emissaries. Other archdevils are forbidden to have contact with him — including Tiamat — and Tiamat's dukes have orders to drive him away from all archdevils or their servants, but not to harm him. This is fine with Armaros, who desires to be left alone to practice and perfect his magical powers anyway.

Due to his talent for magic, both in terms of capacity for innovation and present development, Armaros is potentially too powerful to be allowed the rank of archdevil, for he could well successfully challenge Asmodeus on purely physical terms, given the power base (diabolic servants, wealth, defenses, and communications) of an archdevil. Armaros would require far less in the way of allies and outside aid than other pretenders to the Overlord's throne, and thus could well overcome the masterful politics of Asmodeus, who keeps the archdevils hostile to one another and thus divided, rather than united against him.

And yet Armaros is an asset to the hells, a dweomercrafter supreme and one who has had a hand in the making of many of the plane's magical treasures — an asset that Asmodeus wishes kept loyal (and behold) to himself. Due to long-standing feuds with both Adramalech and Phongor, Armaros could not serve at the court of Asmodeus without imperiling their loyalty to the Overlord, and thus the security of Nessus and of the Overlord's rule, so he was placed on Avernus, separate from the archdevils. If any archdevil is found to have

consulted with him, Asmodeus has decreed, he will be exiled and Armaros will take his place as ruler of a plane — and all of the offending archdevil's dukes, consorts, and officers will be exiled or destroyed. Note the double edge of this stroke: Were this to occur, Armaros would have no staff and thus would be the weakest of the archdevils, perhaps prompting others to challenge his rule of the plane, and thus keeping Armaros weak and beholden to Asmodeus for any support given to bail him out. On the other side, the dukes, consorts, and officers of all the incumbent archdevils have a strong incentive not to let any communication occur between Armaros and their archdevil, and will not let themselves serve as emissaries or go-betweens for such a purpose.

Armaros himself is fairly happy with his lot, in the same way that Geryon is content with his — Geryon enjoys his hunting, and Armaros his spellcasting. Armaros has a free hand to do what he likes on Avernus so long as he neither approaches nor molests Tiamat or her consorts, dukes, and armies — nor those of any visiting archdevil — and so he is feared and hated by the other inhabitants of the plane (such as the other exiles, Tiamat's minor offspring, intruders, and the lesser infernal creatures native to Avernus). Armaros is apt to appear without warning, and harm (or even destroy) them, frustrate their plans or activities of the moment, or even experiment with them to perfect a spell (e.g., transforming or otherwise attacking them). He does such things with calm detachment, sometimes even amusement, and cares nothing for the fate of others. He respects only Asmodeus, and shrewd, elegant, or spectacular uses of magic, and is always seeking to further his own arts; any intruders he encounters will be probed for what can be learned (i.e., wrested) from them, to this end.

Armaros can call upon the following spell-like powers at will, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *wall of fire*, *delayed blast fireball* (3d6), *ice storm*, *wall of ice*, *continual light*, *read languages*, *read magic*, *detect magic*, *write*, *erase*, *detect invisibility*, *locate object*, *invisibility* *dispel magic*, *hold person*, *hold monster*, *shapechange*, *dimension door*, *blink*, *beguile*, *charm monster*, *mass charm*, *geas*, *restoration*, *resurrection*, *reverse gravity*, *disintegrate*, *wall of force*, *wall of smoke* (equals *wall of fog* in effects), *unseen servant*, *tongues*, *repulsion*, *darkness* 15' radius, *detect lie*, *remove* (or *bestow*) *curse*, *water breathing*, *passwall*, *fire shield* (both versions), *feeblemind* (devils immune), *telekinesis* (6000 gp weight limit), *flesh to stone* (and its reverse), *dancing lights*, *faerie fire*, *light*, *burning hands* (doing 13 points of damage), *ESP flame strike*, *enchant an item*, *permanency*, *spectral force*, *cause critical wounds*, *heal*, *know alignment*, *true seeing*, *identify* and (fulfill another's) *limited wish*, as well as the powers available to all devils (see the Monster Manual). Armaros can cause fear, with effects as for the 4th-level magic-user spell. He is thought to

be the only devil to have developed and mastered the ability to raise a *prismatic sphere*, which he can do once in every 33-day period.

Thrice per day Armaros can pronounce an (un)holy word. He can use any and all symbol(s) once (each) per 24-hour period. He can unleash two *meteor swarms* per day, and in the same time period attempt to *paralyze* one opponent, cast four *cones of cold* (9d4 +9 damage each), and employ two *fingers of death*. He cannot summon or otherwise call upon the aid of any devil. He regenerates 1 hit point every 3 rounds.

Armaros strikes for 2-8 points of damage if fighting barehanded, but is loath to do so, and will seek to escape if caught at a disadvantage. Note that he can only employ one of his awesome array of magical powers in a round, and thus cannot defy diabolic armies or even individual greater devils with impunity. He is currently experimenting with electrical discharge spells (e.g., *lightning bolt*, *chain lightning*) but has not mastered them.

Armaros appears as a grey-skinned, bearded, handsome-featured human male with dark grey, leathery, batlike wings and two short, forward-thrusting horns on his forehead. His eyes are a luminous blue-green. He usually wears a leather tunic and weapons belt, and pouches containing both spell ingredients and ink, quills, and vellum (scraped, bleached hides) for spell experimentation and recording of results. He does not need the ingredients to exercise the powers listed above. (Note that Armaros knows the ownership and precise properties of all diabolic magical items.) Armaros will readily trade magical knowledge with, and (in exchange for magical knowledge) perform spells for, any creature(s) he meets whom he cannot overcome. He feels no strong loyalty to the hierarchy of the hells, and is obsessed with working, and learning more about, magic.

AZAZEL (Greater Devil)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*
 NO. APPEARING: 1
 ARMOR CLASS: -2
 MOVE: 12"/16"
 HIT DICE: 97 hit points
 % IN LAIR: Nil
 TREASURE TYPE: Nil
 NO. OF ATTACKS: 3
 DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-16/1-4/1-4 or
 by weapon type +4
 SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*
 SPECIAL DEFENSES: +2 or better
 weapon to hit
 MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%
 INTELLIGENCE: *Genius*
 ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*
 SIZE: L (10' tall)
 PSIONIC ABILITY: 215
 Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Azazel, "The Serpent," enjoys combat, but does not take well to being ordered

about by any he deems lesser than himself (this includes all devils except Asmodeus, Mephistopheles, Baalzebul, and Adramalech). As a result of this aggressive rejection of what he deemed undeserved and unfounded authority, he was thrown out of two successive dukedoms, despite being an able general of infernal armies and a master strategist.

Azazel is vain, and often wears rich garments incorporating fur and gold braid, and gaudy, oversized jewelry. He will not cooperate with any devil except those mentioned above unless rewarded, and spends much of his time in self-indulgent amusements such as planning ways to overthrow Tiamat and take control of Avernus. He has lured forth or ambushed and slain no less than three of Tiamat's consorts, and slaughtered great numbers of her lesser spawn.

At will Azazel can call upon the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *wall of fire*, *read magic*, *detect magic*, *detect invisibility* *hold person*, and *polymorph self*. Once per day Azazel can employ *invisibility* on himself, duration unlimited (ceasing when he wills, or when he employs another power; if he struck another creature he would become visible for 1 round, but could thereafter become *invisible* again unless he willed otherwise or used another of his spell-like powers). Thrice per day he can *dispel magic*. His touch causes *fear*, as he wills. Azazel regenerates 2 hit points per round. (Note that he cannot use a *symbol*, nor *summon* another devil.)

Azazel appears as a winged, emerald-green, scaled humanoid with broad (40' wingspan) batlike wings and a snakelike head. His great fangs do 2-16 damage when he bites; his clawed hands and feet do little damage (1-4 and 1-2 each respectively), but he usually prefers to employ weapons such as a three-bladed military fork and a broadsword. Azazel can employ all five attacks (jaws, two hands, two feet) if unarmed and in flight or swooping.

Azazel, like his fellow exile Dagon (see below), shares his name with a demon prince (a cause of mutual displeasure). Azazel was renamed (from "Hazzael," as he was formerly called) by order of Asmodeus, to ensure that his exile was not broken by many summonings to the Prime Material Plane — for the ritual of his summoning had become widely known there — and from whence it was (and is) feared that he would work against the plans of the archdevils, and gather strength to challenge for a place among them. Like Kochbiel (see below), his lighting abilities are still respected in the hells.

CAHOR (Greater Devil)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*
 NO. APPEARING: 1
 ARMOR CLASS: -1
 MOVE: 14"
 HIT DICE: 93 hit points

% IN LAIR: Nil
 TREASURE TYPE: Nil
 NO. OF ATTACKS: 1
 DAMAGE/ATTACK: 6-11 or by
weapon type +5
 SPECIAL ATTACKS: See below
 SPECIAL DEFENSES: +2 or better
weapon to hit
 MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%
 INTELLIGENCE: Exceptional
 ALIGNMENT: Lawful evil (chaotic
 tendencies)
 SIZE: M (6' tall)
 PSIONIC ABILITY: 215
 Attack/Defense Modes: All/all

Cahor, "The Deceiver," is a scheming, masterful actor and mimic who is most skilled in his use of illusions — and is heartily detested even in the hells, for he is chaotically untrustworthy and untruthful, to the point where he became useless in the hierarchy; no underling could act upon his orders for fear of those orders being denied later, and no superior could entrust any task to him. But he is outwardly obedient at all times to archdevils, acting contrary to commands only when not under direct observation by the one who issued them; for such contrary actions Cahor will always have plausible, well-thought-out rationalizations or reasons. Those who have encountered him and lived to grow wiser know that his words can never be trusted.

Cahor now amuses himself by trying to

make Avernus a realm of confusion, where no one but he knows where they stand. Intruders, lesser devils, and greater devils alike he manipulates and misinforms to stir up trouble, create feuds and strife, and upset diabolic plans. Cahor's destruction will be secretly applauded by those devils who inhabit Avernus — but no devils move directly to destroy him themselves, for Cahor's indirect work on the Prime Material Plane, and his efforts to diffuse the activities of intruders into Avernus who seek to strike at the hells, is invaluable. As much of the active "hellish doings" on the Prime Material Plane are Cahor's work as they are that of any of the archdevils; he is energetically evil and has carefully developed contacts on the Prime Material Plane(s). He enjoys engaging in one-sided battles with lemures or intruders, ripping into and rendering opponents with snarling savagery.

Cahor can employ the following spell-like powers at will, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics, produce flame, detect illusion, detect invisibility, polymorph self, audible glamor, spectral force, dancing lights, darkness, wall of smoke* (equals *wall of fog* in effects), *blindness, detect magic, fly* (maneuverability class A, 16" move), *misdirection, ventriloquism, ESP, fire shield* (both versions), *dispel illusion, and mass-morph*. Thrice per day Cahor can cause *confusion* by his gaze, and once per day he can *paralyze* a creature by touch (save vs. spell at -1 to avoid either of these effects).

At will Cahor can generate *fear* in a 10-foot radius about himself. Cahor regenerates 1 hit point per round. (Note that he cannot use a *symbol*, nor *summon* any other devil.)

Cahor's true appearance is rarely seen; he prefers to pose as a man or demi-human, deceiving those he meets with the aid of his *misdirection* and *ESP* abilities. (One adventurer writes that his diabolic nature betrays him; his breath remains uncomfortably hot when he is in this form.) He usually wears a tattered grey robe and poses as an imbecile or deaf-mute. In his true form, Cahor appears as a tall, mottled black- and grey-skinned, horned and bat-winged humanoid. He has black hair, mustache and beard, a human face of cruelly handsome aspect, and a pinkish-white barbed tail which can manipulate knots, keys, fastenings and the like, but is not strong enough to wield a weapon. Cahor's eyes are yellowish-brown; they shine green when he becomes enraged (a rare event). Cahor prefers to employ his powers of illusion in combat, striking from afar with black javelins of iron (he usually carries three such weapons). Hand-to-hand, he prefers to use a scimitar, but will make use of any weapon available.

DAGON (Greater Devil)

FREQUENCY: Unique (Very rare)
 NO. APPEARING: 1
 ARMOR CLASS: -1

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MOVE: 12"

HIT DICE: 91 hit points

% IN LAIR: Nil

TREASURE TYPE: See below

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: By weapon type +5

SPECIAL ATTACKS: See below

SPECIAL DEFENSES: See below

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: Exceptional

ALIGNMENT: Lawful evil (neutral tendencies)

SIZE: M (5' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 211

Attack/Defense Modes: All/all

Dagon is one of the most despised of the diabolic outcasts. The ritual of his summoning became relatively well known among human conjurers, and he was so often summoned to the Prime Material Plane that he began to freely carry on covert dealings with humans and other spellcasters, providing (for a fee, of course) substances found only in the hells for collections and alchemical ingredients, and information to aid in the summoning of fellow greater devils. For these dangerous practices (which weaken all of the devils) and for his unpleasant activities within the hells, Asmodeus changed his name and banished him to Avernus. He was formerly known as Jagon, the least duke in the court of Asmodeus. In that capacity he traveled freely about the Nine Hells as the herald and messenger of Adramalech and



Asmodeus; these tasks are now performed by various pit fiends and dukes.

The "unpleasant activities" referred to above included similar trading of information, including hints as to the truenames and the preferences of various she-devils with regard to an archdevil winning one of their hands to be his consort. For this pandering, he is especially despised by all of the consorts and she-devils in the hells; none will aid him, work with him, or even speak civilly with him.

To make Jagon's exile a punishment rather than a mere inconvenience, and to lessen his treachery against the hells, it was necessary for Asmodeus to end his frequent summonings to the Prime Material Plane. The Overlord accomplished this by forcibly changing Jagon's name to Dagon, the name of a demon prince — an insult to both Jagon and the demon Dagon, and a means of confounding the familiar summoning rituals used by Prime Material plane conjurers. The Overlord did not destroy his former herald because Jagon's continued existence — and knowledge of the consort's truenames — remains a threat to many of the consorts, thus ensuring their loyalty to Asmodeus, upon whose protection they must depend.

Dagon will be pleased and flattered if addressed by his former, proper name, and will try to bargain with any intelligent being whom he perceives to possess the means of escaping or returning from the hells to the Prime Material Plane, offering (honestly and generously) much treasure in return for a service: to seek out certain conjurers (Dagon recalls their names, descriptions, and the locations he was summoned to by each, in perfect detail — although most must be dead by now) and spread the word of his name-change and the means of summoning hence anew. He sees this as the only way out of his present exile, and if he obtains this outlet, he will serve with diligent enthusiasm until he has built up a frequent clientele of summoners again.

Dagon is not a fair or kind bargainer or servant; he firmly believes in a lawful society wherein the stronger rule the weak (devils being the strongest, and distributing their services to summoners is seen as a

form of largesse). He thinks himself above the rulings and laws of Asmodeus, whom he disagrees with. Of the archdevils, he most closely identifies with Geryon, and feels a sort of kinship to the rebellious pit fiends on the fringes of the frigid eighth plane, Caina. Dagon is a most accomplished actor and diplomat when he wishes to be, and often successfully impersonates a fellow intruder or explorer to trap or gain the measure and cooperation of intruders whom he encounters in Avernus. He is master of his own temper, reactions, and visible emotions. He has much treasure, including many items of evil magic — gained from both devils and Prime Material Plane clients — hidden away around Avernus, and will not hesitate to spend some of this wealth to obtain something he wants.

Dagon can employ the following spell-like powers at will, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics, produce flame, wall of fire, ice storm, wall of force, charm monster, hold person, beguile, read magic, read languages, tongues, detect magic, detect invisibility, polymorph self, invisibility, detect lie, locate object, obscure alignment, and misdirection*. Once per day he can cast a *meteor swarm*, and once a day he can create a *wall of thorns*.

Dagon can strike barehanded for 2-8 points of damage, but he prefers to employ weapons — usually a whip and rapier, or some sort of polearm. He regenerates 2 hit points per round. At will, Dagon's gaze can cause *fear* in a single creature within 8" (save vs. spell to avoid).

Dagon usually appears as a red-skinned satyr with a slyly handsome, hairless visage, pointed ears, and short, curving horns like those of a pit fiend. His eyes are green, and shine brightly when he is angry or excited. He wears a weapon-harness (see above for weapons carried) and backpack, and often tries to pretend that he is an unfortunate woodlands creature trapped in the hells and seeking to escape back to the Prime Material Plane, employing his powers of *misdirection* and *obscure alignment* to reinforce this deception.

DUSKUR (Greater Devil)

FREQUENCY: Unique (Very rare)

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -4

MOVE: 16"/22"

HIT DICE: 111 hit points

% IN LAIR: Nil

TREASURE TYPE: See below

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-8/2-8

SPECIAL ATTACKS: See below

SPECIAL DEFENSES: +2 or better
weapon to hit

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 85%

INTELLIGENCE: Exceptional

ALIGNMENT: Lawful evil

SIZE: M (6' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 219

Attack/Defense Modes: All/all

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Duskur is an enigmatic and mysterious she-devil, sometimes called "The Dark Lady." She roams the wastes of Avernus accompanied by the skeleton and zombie armies she has raised, having spurned more than one archdevil who offered her his hand (Geryon and Belial are known to have been among her rejected suitors), and chosen to have no mate instead.

Although Amduscias, Malphas, and Goap respect her more than any other of the outcast "rabble of devilkin" that they must protect Tiamat from, they have orders to slay Duskur if possible, and in any event prevent her (or any of the outcast devils) from occupying and fortifying any lair or stronghold on Avernus from which the outcast(s) might gather strength and challenge Tiamat's rule. So Duskur wanders, avoiding greater devils as much as possible. When encountered, she is almost always found within a ring of skeletons who bear her arms, personal effects, and treasure (all types possible) gained from victims.

Duskur can employ the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *wall of fire*, *ice storm*, *invisibility*, *levitate*, *detect magic*, *dispel magic*, *read magic*, *read languages*, *ESP*, *tongues*, *blink*, *hold person*, *shatter*, *gust of wind*, *push*, *detect invisibility*, and *bridge of fire*. This latter power is like a *wall of fire* except that it can span chasms, climb heights, etc., in the form of a blazing, flat path with neither side-rails nor supports reaching the ground below; only Duskur and creatures she is carrying can walk on it; all others will pass or fall through it. Once per day she can cast a *meteor swarm*, and once per day *reverse gravity*.

Duskur's kiss causes *sleep* if she wills it (no saving throw, but creatures immune to the spell *sleep*, and all greater devils, are unaffected), and thereby she gains most of her prey. She bears an venomous dagger similar to the weapon carried by erinyes devils (see the Monster Manual), and her skeletal bodyguards carry other weapons gained from victims. With each fist Duskur can strike for 2-8 points of damage. She regenerates 1 hit point per round.

Duskur appears as a winged but otherwise normal human female of thin, shapely form and graceful movements. Her flesh is snow-white, her eyes black pools — iris, pupils, and all a glistening black — and her hair long and black. Her wings are smoky-grey and white, leathery rather than feathered, and she usually wears a long, sweeping hooded cloak over them unless actually in flight. She is said to sometimes sing to herself in a beautiful fluting, high voice, but she bears no musical instrument or any love for the music of others.

KOCHBIEL (Greater Devil)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -3

MOVE: 6"/15"

HIT DICE: 104 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: 20%

TREASURE TYPE: *See below*

NO. OF ATTACKS: 4

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +8*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: +2 *or better*
weapon to hit

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (14' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 215

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Once a great general of the hells (marshal to the archdevil Beherit, now destroyed), Kochbiel was too feared and mistrusted by the other archdevils to win himself another place in the hierarchy. A cold and calculating general, his inspired tactics, iron leadership, and personal brawn made him the victor in many armed squabbles on Avernus and elsewhere in the hells, leading Beherit's legions. Although he never seemed to delight in defeating opponents — only in the lighting and strategy involved — many in the hells still bear grudges. Kochbiel takes care to avoid large groups or devils and all archdevils in his present exile, and is as elusive as his fellow exile Duskur (see above). Kochbiel is said to have explored (and enlarged upon) many subterranean chasms, caverns, and tunnel-warrens in Avernus, and is believed to spend much of his time moving about from one of these rough lairs to another. He is said to have gathered rich hoards of treasure in the most remote of these hideaways, and certainly much of what is known to have been brought to Avernus is presently unaccounted for. He and Nergal (see DRAGON issue #75) are rivals, and often find and raid each other's treasure hoards.

Kochbiel (pronounced *Kawkh - beel*) is very cunning and perceptive in matters of battle, ambush, and taking the measure of opponents. He is surprised only rarely (1 in 12 chance), and is always armed with at least four weapons taken from fallen foes. He can strike with all four of his arms in a round, at different targets if desired, and does 4-7 (1d4 +3) points of damage per fist if striking barehanded. He has 18/00 strength, regenerates 2 hit points per melee round, and can hold and constrict a single opponent for 2-8 points of damage per round if he scores a successful hit with his tail.

Kochbiel is able to employ any of the following spell-like powers at will, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *wall of fire*, *detect magic*, *detect invisibility*, *polymorph self*, *hold person*, *invisibility*, *fireball* (3d6), *push*, *wall of force*, and *ice storm*. At will he can also shed *fear* in a 30' radius (save vs. spell to avoid). Once per day Kochbiel can cast *repulsion*, and thrice per day he can *dispel magic*. He cannot use a *symbol*, nor *summon* any devil.

Kochbiel resembles an especially large,

grey-skinned pit fiend with tall, curving, bull-like red horns. He has four massively muscled arms set in two opposing pairs — that is, a "front" pair plus a "back" pair facing the other way, two arms sharing a bony-plated, spike-horn-protected shoulder on each side of his body. Kochbiel can light four opponents on four sides at once with apparent ease. His eyes are a brilliant, flashing yellow, and his tongue and inner mouth a vivid purple.

MALAREA (Greater Devil)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -1

MOVE: 9"/24"

HIT DICE: 96 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: Nil

TREASURE TYPE: *See below*

NO. OF ATTACKS: 3

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-4/2-5/2-5 *or*
by weapon type +2

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: +2 *or better*
weapon to hit

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70%

INTELLIGENCE: *High*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (7' tall, 28' wingspan)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 213

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Malarea (pronounced *Mahl-ah-ree -ah*) is a bitter and envious devil. She despises many of the consorts of the Nine Hells and desires (to the point of mania) to join their ranks. If she has to slay them all to claim her rightful place among them, she will do so unhesitatingly — but rude defeats on the occasions of her bold, direct assaults in the past have made her more cautious.

Malarea remains a fiercely combative, fractious devil, given to sudden berserk rages and wild physical attacks. This temperament probably cost her a consortship or other position in the hierarchy of the hells, and has certainly earned her her present exile. She has learned little, however: if she recognizes an archdevil, duke, or unique greater devil, she will pause to ascertain their situation and intentions before she attacks — but she almost always attacks eventually, except when faced with impossible odds. Lesser devils and intruders are her prey — she will attack any such creatures immediately, swooping at them to bite (1-4 damage) and strike with a lance, spear, or other weapon gained from a previous victim, or bare-handed with her iron-hard claws. Malarea is a strong flyer, and often buffets airborne opponents with her great wings, or rams into them at full speed (1-12 damage).

Malarea is able to use the following spell-like powers at will, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *wall of fire*, *detect magic*, *dispel magic*, *detect invisibility*, *hold person*, and *polymorph self*. She can shed *fear* in a 2" radius

at will (save vs. spell to avoid), and can cast a *delayed blast fireball* (5d6) thrice per day. She regenerates 1 hit point every 2 rounds.

Malarea appears as a tall, human-like female with huge black wings, which tower 6 feet above her own head when furled; in short, rather like an erinyes (see the Monster Manual). Her eyes are fiery red, her hair long, greasy, and black, her body sleek but powerfully muscled and of a faintly luminescent, “ghostly” white hue. Her hands have long claws, and she has large, vampire-like fangs. Malarea speaks Mabrahoring (the language of the hells), her alignment tongue, and the common tongue. She is usually encountered wearing some gaudy trophy of a previous victim — a gleaming necklace or jeweled belt, but she cares nothing for the value of such items, and will carelessly discard one for another of gaudier appearance.

Malarea roams Avernus, avoiding the armies of Tiamat’s dukes and the Chromatic Dragon herself, but striking at all others she meets, seeking to slay and devour. If she encounters strong and determined opposition, it is quite likely that she will abruptly break off combat and wing away in search of other prey.

NISROCH (Greater Devil)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -1

MOVE: 14”/6”

HIT DICE: 99 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: Nil

TREASURE TYPE: Nil

NO. OF ATTACKS: 3

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 3-12/1-4/1-4

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: +2 *or better*
weapon to hit

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (11’ tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 217

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Nisroch, “The Eagle,” is the poisoner of the hells; he is polite, cruel, faintly mocking, and darkly humorous — and will try to slay any creature that thwarts his will. He destroyed the duke Senciner and nearly slew Abigor, another duke, and for this was banished. He now has little chance to practice his favorite art, poisoning sumptuous feasts, but instead contents himself with concocting deadly poisons from the sparse ingredients at hand in Avernus, and poisoning corpses and other food sources to surprise the unwary.

Nisroch can employ the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics, produce flame, affect normal fires, continual light, read magic, detect magic, detect invisibility hold monster, create food & water, purify* (and *purify*) *food & drink, darkness 15’ radius,*

and *silence 15’ radius.* Once every 24 hours, Nisroch can create an *incendiary cloud* up to 6” distant. He can also *heal* himself (within 1 round) or another creature (by touch) once per day. At will, Nisroch can radiate *fear* in a 10’-radius sphere about himself (save vs. spell to avoid effects). Nisroch regenerates 1 hit point per melee round. (Note that he cannot employ a *symbol*, nor *summon* any other devil.)

Nisroch appears as an upright male humanoid with an eagle’s head, black feathers upon his head and chest, yellow eyes and talons, humanoid arms, and batlike wings protruding from his shoulders, separate from his arms. Where he is not feathered, Nisroch’s leathery, hairless skin is dusty black in hue. His elbows end in upswept, barbed spines; a slash from one of these, likely to be incurred only if the victim is grappling with Nisroch or attacking him from above, does 1-3 points of damage.

Nisroch’s unblinking stare rivets most who look upon him; he says little and observes much. He prefers to overcome opponents by subterfuge and poison rather than in open battle, but is not loath to fight non-devils, opponents, he deems weaker than himself, or any who attack him. In battle he uses his cruel, hooked beak (3-12 damage), his talons, and his spines (see above). His hands are not taloned and are not used in battle except to grapple with, snatch at, or disarm opponents; Nisroch avoids using weapons except in a pinch.

RUMJAL (Greater Devil)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -2

MOVE: 16”/16”

HIT DICE: 100 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: Nil

TREASURE TYPE: Nil

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-8/2-8 (fists)

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: +2 *or better*
weapon to hit

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 65%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (8’ tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 209

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Expelled from the hierarchy of the hells for the molestation of Geryon’s consort Cozbi (see DRAGON issue #75), Rumjal is a proud and bitter exile, who delights in tormenting lemures, lesser devils, and non-diabolic visitors to Avernus. He is tolerated by Tiamat and her dukes far more than the other exiled devils, for he has in the past informed them of the schemes of both Nergal (see DRAGON issue #75) and several nycadaemons, and physically aided them in thwarting such plans. It is said that Asmodeus likes Rumjal, and does not wish him harmed or ill used.

Rumjal still considers himself lieutenant to Geryon (his former post) and a legitimate member of the hierarchy of the hells who has been temporarily displaced by a fall from favor. He acts accordingly, hoping that the loyalty and usefulness of his actions will restore him to his rightful place in the hierarchy (and he may be right). Rumjal, although a cruel prankster and an admirer of wit, art, and poetry, will let nothing sway him from the course of action that a loyal scion of the hells would take. He will never fawn or flatter when dealing with archdevils or other dukes, although he is always polite and generally good-natured; he deals with all other devils as equals. He often remarks that Asmodeus used to enjoy a good game of chess with him, and this is true.

Rumjal can employ the following spell-like powers at will, once per round and one at a time: *pyrotechnics, produce flame, light, read magic, read languages, detect invisibility, blink, and ring of fire.* This latter power produces a hollow circle of fire identical to a *wall of fire* in effects, except that Rumjal can throw it, roll it, and pick it up and swing it about; he is the only being able to do so. Once per day Rumjal can utter a *power word, blind.* His touch causes *fear* (save vs. spell at -2 to avoid). Rumjal regenerates 2 hit points per round. (Note that he cannot use a *symbol* nor *summon* another devil.)

Rumjal appears as a tall, muscular, hairless, slate-grey humanoid with a cruel, grinning human visage, dead-white curving horns, and bat wings. He has a prehensile tail of the same dead-white hue that splits at its end into three back-curving, barbed points, like a fishhook, with which he can flail (1-6 tearing damage) at opponents or constrict them (1 - 10 crushing damage per round). The barbs on his tail are envenomed with Rumjal’s caustic spittle, and upon each strike from a barb a victim must save vs. poison or take a further 2-8 points of corrosive, tissue-eating damage. This venom works only in open wounds; it reacts with a victim’s blood as it works, changing to become mere water. For obvious reasons, this liquid has not been analyzed or reproduced by alchemists. Rumjal produces it only in small quantities; in a pinch, he could spit it directly, but can only do so once in a 3-day period, and habitually uses it instead to keep his weapons well smeared.

Riches of the hells

Understandably, details of the treasures of the hells are largely unknown. Much is speculation, based on inference and fragmentary records. The following plane-by-plane summary is by no means complete., Note that, as a general rule, treasure in the hells is *not* lying around unguarded, and if it is taken, it will be actively pursued and recovered. Note that all consorts have fine clothing and jewelry (including diadems), and all archdevils have personal treasuries, not usually known about in detail.

Note also that many items of no intrinsic value (the skull of a devil, the normally used weapons of all devils, etc.) will have a high value to collectors if brought intact to the Prime Material Plane — rulers, sages, priests of rival gods, and such figures often like to possess and display such artifacts; these “treasures” are also not specifically mentioned herein. DMs should consider the possible alignment or physical-damage effects of wielding diabolic weapons or magic items. It should be noted that most forges and jeweler’s workshops on the planes of the Nine Hells are within the fortresses of archdevils, unless specifically mentioned as otherwise.

Avernus

The wastelands of Avernus have no easily accessible natural treasure, although deep-lying rocks (reached only by a few labyrinthine caverns and remote rifts) are said to contain some naturally occurring garnet, spinel, ruby, and sapphire. Many small hoards and caches (of varied treasure gained from intruders and from raids on Tiamat’s hoard) have been concealed in the many caverns of Avernus by Dagon, Kochbiel, and Nergal. Magic items and all types of currency are to be found among these — if they can be found at all, for all are difficult to locate (if they were not, they would have already been raided by other devils), and most are trapped with acid, balanced rocks (deadfalls), stake-lined pit traps, etc.

The largest single hoard on Avernus is certainly that of Tiamat, consisting of 100% of treasure types H, S, T, and U. She knows the size and components of her hoard intimately, will spot any thefts immediately, and has charged her consorts to guard her treasure at all times in her absence. Some abishai (see DRAGON issue #75 or Monster Manual II) encountered may bear treasure, and any erinyes encountered will have a *rope of entanglement* and a *dagger of venom*.

Individual devils also carry treasure of note, as follows:

Amduscias — All types possible, small amounts; carried only when in human form.

Goap — (J, R)
Malphas — 333 gems of base value 100 gp each, on robes.

Armaros — Spell components, fragments of spells and relevant notes written on vellum (in Mabrahoring, the language of the hells), magic items and knowledge of same.

Duskur — small amounts of all treasure types possible; gained from victims and carried by her skeleton bodyguards.

Malarea — Gaudy (appearance over material value) treasures worn as personal adornment; plunder from victims.

Dis

In the hills of the plane of Dis are a few, almost worked-out veins of nearly pure copper, and smaller amounts of the ores of

iron, tin, and zinc. These have been extensively worked by the devils, and the working are constantly labored in and guarded. In underwater crevices along the banks of the rivers of Dis, deposits of turquoise are found, but much of the mineral wealth of Dis has already been mined.

In the streets and underways (“pits”) of the Iron City of Dis there are undoubtedly items of treasure lost amidst the darkness, filth, and garbage. Large hoards, however, are found only in the palace of Dispatar and in the fortresses of his dukes.

Individual devils may own and perhaps be carrying treasure as follows:

Dispatar — The lord of this plane has a sizable treasure (Qx10, S) of gold pieces, worked turquoise gems, spare *ropes of entanglement* and *daggers of venom* (see Monster Manual, “Erinyes,” for special venom effects), and his personal rod (see MM illustration of Dispatar for its appearance), which has the combined powers of a *rod of rulership* and a double-strength (4-24 damage) *staff of striking*.

Lilis — (Qx4, S)

Arioch — Dispatar’s bodyguard carries a 20’ - long double-ended +1 *halberd* of adamantite, and bears monetary treasure only upon the order of his superior.

Biffant — Dispatar’s provost carries an ornate iron rod of office (finely made; worth 20 gp for its workmanship alone), and controls a treasury amounting to (Qx8, S).

Alocer and Bitru — These dukes, who



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command companies of erinyes in Dispat-
ter's service, each have (G, P) plus a sizable
number of spare *ropes of entanglement* and
daggers of venom. Bitru also has his per-
sonal weapon, a +3 *two-handed sword*.

Titivilus — (G, S, T) plus a silver-bladed
sword of wounding; its hilt is adorned with
three rubies, each of 1700 gp value.

Baalzephon — personal treasure equal to
(J, R) hidden about Dispat's palace.

In addition, all of the dukes have small,
well-hidden hoards of treasure in their
fiefdoms, accumulated over centuries from
intruders and from mining efforts — the
little baubles they hoped Dispat would not
miss or begrudge them.

Minauros

Mammon, ruler of this plane, is known
as the "Lord of Avarice" for good reason:
he jealously guards all items of value in his
fortress (called "Galbuach," but more often
referred to as "Mammon's House" or not
named at all). His hoard is said to be great
(Hx20, Sx6, Ux2, Vx3 plus unknown addi-
tions), but Mammon never lets a single
piece of it outside of his vaults — the guard-
ing of which is the first of Focalor's duties.
Focalor himself commands a much smaller
treasure, the "palace purse" (F, I, Qx3),
which he is allowed to spend as he sees fit to
ensure the security and comfort of the for-
tress. Mammon's personal wealth, kept on
his person or in his apartments, is (H, R).
Mammon fights with a fauchard-fork that

does normal damage, but otherwise acts as
a *sword of wounding*. His consort Glasya is
known to have treasure equal to (I, Qx5,
S), and she carries a *dagger of venom*.

The marshy surface of Minauros itself
may well hold many small treasures fallen
from slain intruders, but all large, magical,
or noticeable items have been taken. Mam-
mon's dukes have no fortresses, but inhabit
bowl-like craters in the higher parts of the
volcanic ridges on this plane. Here they
hold their treasure, typically in chests, in a
pit covered by a massive boulder and con-
stantly guarded by a score or more of their
troops. These treasures are as follows:

Bael — (G, P), guarded by barbed devils.
He carries a bronze +2 *morning star* that
can change its length from 4 feet anywhere
up to 8 feet, as its wielder desires.

Caarcinolaas — (G, P), guarded by
barbed devils. He carries a +3 *scythe*.

Malchon — (G, P), guarded by two rings
of erinyes — one aloft and one on the
ground. Malchon has no magical weapons,
but all of his arms are poisoned.

Zimimar — (J, R)

Phlegethos

This active, fiery plane is rich in mineral
and gemstone wealth due to its volcanic
activity: all major metals are found here —
including the two metals unique to the hells,
arjale and *tantulhor*. Obsidian and dia-
monds abound in hardened lava-flows, and
rubies, sapphires, zircons, spinels, tourma-
lines, and lapis lazuli (lazurite) are recov-
ered in large quantities from the mines,
where spined devils labor ceaselessly under
the eyes of barbed devil overseers. The
outlands are well patrolled (by barbed dev-
ils, usually in squads of 12-16), for the
security of this plane is imperiled by the few
salamanders in hiding here (see issue #75,
p. 26), and beings of all sorts (including the
devils of other planes) wishing to make use
of its mineral wealth and splendid natural
forges, the fabled "firefalls." These cata-
racts of liquid fire are always guarded, with
many devils within call, and here (so say
magicians and sages) are made the best
flame tongue swords and the best *helms of
brilliance*. Belial makes much of the normal
weaponry used in the hells here, and is paid
well — in treasure, services, and favors.

In Abriymoch's lowest tiers, surrounded
by hell hound kennels, are Belial's vaults
containing monetary payments; his personal
wealth (A, S, T, Y) resides in his own
chambers high up on the rim of the vol-
cano. Individual devils bear or own treasure
as follows:

Belial — huge +4 *military fork*; if struck,
save vs. spell or be affected as though by a
symbol of pain.

Naome — (P, S, T) plus a large wardrobe
of rich silk and gold wire filigree garments,
with gem-studded belts and pins.

Chamo — (C, P, S) plus an iron-shod +1
staff that parts or negates all web, hold, and
other locking or binding spells or mecha-
nisms by touch, and can also detect good in
a creature (range 9") or item (by touch).

Balan — (C, P)

Bathym — (C, P) plus a black +3 *mace*
which dispels *light*, *continual light*, *faerie
fire*, or *dancing lights* automatically upon
contact with any part of the radiant area,
and a *dagger of venom*.

Gaziel — (P, S)

Zaebos — (J, R)

Zaebos — (J, R)

Stygia

Stygia is rich in natural wealth; its moun-
tains, steam trenches, and waters all yield
valuable substances. Opals and topazes are
dredged up from the bottom of the Styx
(through holes broken in the ice), and the
mountains around Tantlin yield granite,
basalt, marble, and even chalk, from great
quarries where much of the structural stone
used in the Nine Hells is hewn out of the
impassive rock. Rubies, beryls, and tur-
quoise deposits are found in the seams or
veins of these quarries, and in the "steam
trenches" or volcanic rift valleys high in the
outlands of the plane many metallic ores are
found in veins of igneous origin. Spined
devils labor ceaselessly in the quarries under
the direction of bone devil overseers, and
every known "steam trench" is home to
many malebranche.

The massive, labyrinthine halls of Tantlin
are crammed with the plunder of centuries,
items given to or seized by Geryon on many
planes. The exact composition and value of
his hoard are unknown, but in type it is
(Ux?, Vx?, Xx?), rather than coinage of
any sort; statues and temple idols of all
origins are common, as are pieces of furni-
ture, tapestries, unusual or gaudy orna-
ments, and the like. Geryon would merely
be bored with an exquisitely tiny ruby — he
has hundreds — but show him a ruby the
size of a man's head, and he is delighted.
DMs should detail his treasures accordingly.

Geryon himself carries treasure (H, R)
plus a magical bull's horn almost 4 feet in
length, bound about with bands of brass
and pins of nickel. It can be blown only
once in any 7-day period; when sounded it
calls forth 5-20 minotaurs, who will serve
the horn-blower until death. It is a relic of
Geryon's adventuring on other planes, and
is not of diabolic origin. Other individual
devils resident in Stygia may bear treasure
as follows:

Cozbi — +1 *spear*, up to 6 poisoned
knives, personal treasure (C, E) and jewelry
in Tantlin only.

Gorson — (A, G, P)

Herodias — (A, S, G, P)

Agares — (G, P), a +1 *staff* shod in iron,
and trained hawks (1 - 16 in number).

Amon — (G, P) plus a huge +3 *mace*.

Machalas — (G, P) and a +2 *axe*.

Fecor — (J, R)

Malbolge

Like Phlegethos and Stygia above it,
Malbolge is volcanically active, and its fire
pits and caverns yield rubies, sapphires,
and diamonds aplenty. Most of these valu-
ables find their way to Baalzebul's coffers

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via Moloch, Lilith, Tartach, Bileth, Bethage, and Herobaal — all of whom exact a few gems along the way for their own personal gain. They take care to keep most of these apart from their own hoards, and well hidden, until they can sell them unbeknownst to Baalzebul, exchanging them for less easily identifiable coinage. Most gems are to be found in the vaults of the fortresses of malebranche, with many concealed hoards — and raw, unmined gems — about the tortured surface of Malbolge.

Like Phlegethos, Malbolge is a source of the metals *arjale* and *tantulhor* (see the end of this section); Moloch's whip, said to be fashioned of an "unknown, pliable metal" (see *Monster Manual II*), is made of an alloy of *arjale*. These metals are much rarer in Malbolge than in Phlegethos, and are mined by nupperibos and spined devils under the command of malebranche, in a haphazard and untidy fashion. The status of a malebranche is in part measured by his yield of gems and metallic ores, so there is intense rivalry, trickery, and sometimes outright theft or battle between various malebranche in order that each may bring the largest yield to its commander.

It should be noted that personal treasures on Malbolge are portable, and often moved about, as Moloch and court move about in accordance with Baalzebul's wishes. Incidentally, Neabaz the herald (see the following section on Maladomini) is often the recipient of bribes on his visits when a

resident of Malbolge wants something not mentioned, or reported in a certain light or terms, to Baalzebul.

Individual devils on Malbolge may bear treasure as follows:

Moloch — (I, R, S, T, X) plus a 6-tailed whip which transmits his own natural electrical discharges (of great value for its metal, or to collectors).

Lilith — (C, I, S)

Tartach — (C, I, P), a *rope of entanglement*, plus a *sword +1, flame tongue* which is +2 vs. regenerating creatures, +3 vs. cold-using, inflammable, or avian creatures, and +4 vs. undead. Note that in the hells this blade does +2 damage to all devils, but +3 damage to all devils when wielded outside the hells.

Bileth — (C, P) plus a set of gilded coat-of-plate (material value 1200 gp).

Bethage — (J, R)

Herobaal — (J, R)

Maladomini

Maladomini is identical to Malbolge in terms of natural mineral wealth, with perhaps slightly more diamonds and obsidian to be found — but on Maladomini, almost all wealth finds its way to the great fortress of Malagard. Here is a vast, well-guarded (by malebranche) collection of gems (Qx300?) of all varieties, and a similarly protected collection of plants from all planes, tended by nupperibo under the command of a few bone devils, who are in

turn watched by the malebranche. In the vast, seemingly endless chambers and passages of Malagard are many riches of all sorts, from tapestries and furniture to marble and beaten copper wall inlays, but relatively few of these are "lost and forgotten" (more likely, they are surreptitiously hidden and hoarded by malebranche) in the disused, garbage-choked areas. Note that any attack upon, or pilferage from, Malagard will swiftly bring ever-increasing hordes of malebranche down upon the intruders' heads.

Individual devils resident on Maladomini may carry treasure as follows:

Baalzebul — (E, R, V)

Bafts — (D, G) plus a finely worked bronze spear (material value 4 gp).

Neabaz — May have some treasure due to bribes, or carried upon Baalzebul's business and explicit orders. He also holds a *sword +1, flame tongue* (see Tartach, above, for effects vs. devils) that when grasped can *know alignment* of any creature pointed at, and can fire 9 *magic missile* spells (1 missile per spell) per day. Neabaz wears a cape of blood-red silk which can at the wearer's will give forth a "cold version" *fire shield* up to 4 times per day, each aura lasting up to three rounds as desired; these flames will not harm the wings of Neabaz. Both the sword and cape are believed to be of Prime Material Plane origin.

Barbatos — Carries treasure only upon the orders and specific business of Baalze-

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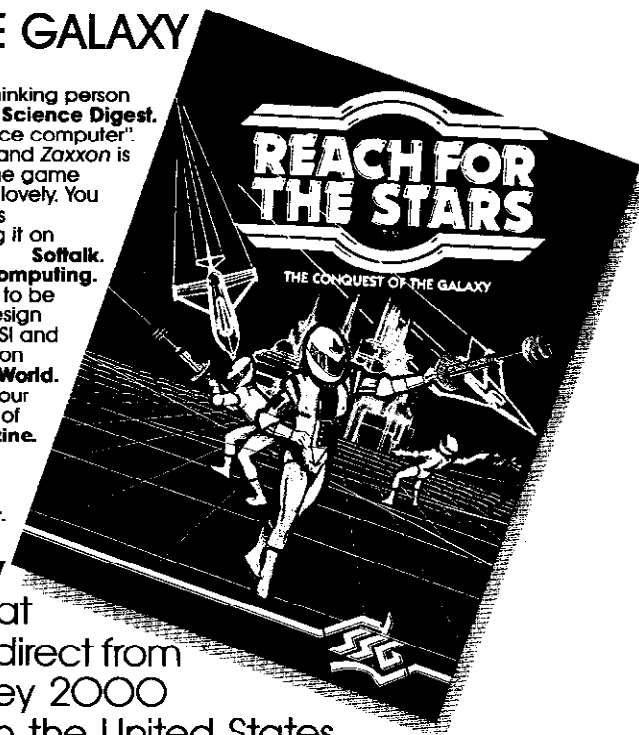
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bul, but when on the Prime Material Plane can *detect treasure* (of metal or mineral nature, as in a *wand of metal and mineral detection*) at a 3" range, and gains as much treasure as he can when there, which he gives to Baalzebul if seen with it, but otherwise hides in Malagard; the amounts and types thus hoarded are unknown.

Abigor — (A, I) plus a +2 *battleaxe*.

Zepar — (A, P), a hand axe and shortsword that are both envenomed (save vs. poison or faint for 1-6 melee rounds), and black-hued +1 *plate armor*.

Caina

Caina, the largely frigid realm of Mephistopheles, is rich in mineral wealth. Where hot magma meets the cold surface conditions (particularly in the "hot fringes" of the plane), it cools in metal-rich veins. Forges are located all about this region, under the administration of Nexroth. In the icy interior of Caina, magma cools and hardens at greater depths, forming what we know as "plutonic rocks": crystal-rich ores such as pegmatite, which harden in "dykes" and are the source of beryl, topaz, garnet, tourmaline, and many quartz gemstones. These are mined, at great peril, by nupperibos and ice devils who tunnel down through the unstable, shifting rifts of the great glaciers to reach deep rock exposed by glacial action. Rifts may open — or close — with sudden, crushing force, and mining tasks are — to say the least — not eagerly sought by the ice devils.

Mephistar, the iron citadel of Mephistopheles, contains the greatest treasure hoard on Caina (believed to be H, Xx10) under the guard of ice devils and spined devils commanded by Barbas. Nargus, the glacial palace of Bifrons, also has rich treasures — ice sculptures (non-portable, and rapidly destroyed when away from regions of biting cold) and gems (Qx14).

The nobles of Caina (two companies of pit fiends, including Silcharde, Bechard, Guland, Sphandor, Buldumech, Anxrabab, Ezegul, Ulfrin, and Seilazar) all have personal treasure equal to (J, R) each, but many may well have more, for their loyalty to Mephistopheles is minimal, and little tribute from the outer fringes reaches the Lord of No Mercy.

The hollows, caves, and glacial clefts of Caina are vast and remain little plundered for their mineral wealth, but Adonides, Steward of the Realm, keeps a careful eye on what creatures go where and what areas are disturbed. No intruders will mine in even the most remote areas of Caina for long before an ice devil, or a patrol of 1-4 ice devils, or even Adonides himself, with his guard of 16 ice devils, will appear.

Individual devils resident in Caina may bear treasure as follows:

Mephistopheles — (R, X, Z) plus a great 3-tined +3 *fork*. Upon the wielder's command, this weapon can deliver 3-12 points of cold, electrical, or fire damage as well as normal weapon damage. Each special attack form is usable 3 times per day; targets who save vs. spell will suffer only half damage.

Baalphegor — (R, X, Z)

Bele — Carries a *dagger of venom* and a black rod of office (equal to a *rod of smiting*), and also has personal *fools gold* natural power (as in the 2nd-level magic-user spell; 9 cubic feet affected, and saving throws of all creatures viewing the gold are at +9).

Adonides — (R, X, Z) plus a twisted, spiked +1 *staff*.

Barbas — (R, X, Z), a *staff of striking*, 3 *daggers of venom*, and a *chaotic good iron goad*. This last item is a rod with a hook at one end; it does 4-24 damage to all lawful evil creatures, including devils; other creatures suffer 1-6 (size L) or 2-8 (size S or M) points of damage.

Bifrons — (R, Qx6, Z) plus an envenomed scimitar (effects same as an erinyes' blade).

Hutijin — (G) plus a *net of snaring* and a +3 *trident*.

Nexroth — (J,R) . . . plus more, hidden away?

Nessus

The nethermost plane of the Nine Hells, variously known as Cocytus or Nessus, is the abode of the Overlord, Asmodeus, and the source of much of the wealth of the hells.

In the crags that lie all about the far reaches of the plane are to be found all gems and metals known on the Prime Material Plane, and in the central rifts, perhaps



aided by the unique conditions there (the "firewinds"), are to be found rich deposits of the two metals unique to the hells, as well as veins bearing the fiery red, strongly lawful evil gems unique to Nessus, the "hellstones."

Hellstones are the hardest gems known — many have survived hammer blows and weapon attacks unscathed. They are lit by an inner, flickering radiance, and do damage to all non-evil creatures (and half damage to non-lawful creatures of evil) upon the slightest contact, equal to 1-4 points +1 hit point per level or hit dice of the creature touched. The pit fiend Alastor is known to bear a double-bladed +4 *axe*, the head of which is studded with hellstones. The stones are rare, valuable (4000 gp each), but superstition-shrouded on the Prime Material Plane. Apart from the danger to most people of handling them (for they retain their damaging properties when removed from the hells) — even with tongs or gloves, the chance of an inadvertent contact is great — many priesthoods, classes (i.e., paladins), and individuals will not wish to possess or even be close to them, except to destroy them.

Sometimes, sages assert, contact with a hellstone does no damage, but causes a subtle change in alignment, not immediately noticed by the victim, one step closer toward lawful evil. A crushed hellstone — one that is shattered into many small fragments — will lose its radiance and capacity to cause damage. Due to their often lethal damaging properties, hellstones are often called "deathstones," "doomstones," or the like. Their "scholarly" name is Ulith, or the plural Ulithim.

The clear green waters of the river Lethe cause permanent *feeble-mindedness* (save vs. poison to avoid; devils are immune), and it is thus dangerous to capture and convey the liquid elsewhere; it is said to retain its power on other planes. Properties of the frozen waters of Lake Cocytus are unknown. The vast Burning Wood between the lake and the river Lethe (see DRAGON issue #76) yields ever-blazing branches (causing 1-4 points of flame damage upon a touch) with blue-green sap or ichor that is valued as a potion and spell-ink ingredient,

and as an unguent or ingredient used in the making of many magic items.

Such natural substances of Nessus may well bring high prices (15,000 gp and up) per item or container if sold to alchemists, sages, and magic-users on the Prime Material Plane. It should be noted that aerial patrols of pit fiends watch the rifts, crags, and woods of Nessus closely, and the mighty personal armies of Asmodeus are always encamped in a ring about the Overlord's palace.

The palace is vast and beautiful, crammed with all sorts of exquisite creatures and objects, many of which are highly valued on the Prime Material Plane and elsewhere. Details of the palace and its treasures are not known to non-devils, although it is commonly thought in the hells that Asmodeus holds in his palace more riches than are in the clutches of devils in all the rest of the Nine Hells put together. Even his pit fiend guards have (J, R) personal treasure.

Individual devils are, however, known to possess — and may bear some or all of — the following:

Asmodeus — (I, R, U, V) plus his glowing rod of pure ruby (1,000,000 gp material value) with opaline tip that can cause *serious wounds* upon touch. It also acts as a *rod of absorption*, and upon command will shoot a cone of frost, jet of acid, or bolt of lightning (equal in range and effects to these attacks as often as 9 times per 13 turns, 1 attack per round. If desired by the wielder, the rod can fire one particular attack in 9 successive rounds, or strike continuously, using all three attack forms interchangeably, for 27 successive rounds. No audible command word is required to fire these attacks, and Asmodeus can mentally override the commands of any non-archdevil who grasps the rod unless he himself is slain, on another plane, unconscious, or engaged in psionic combat. The rod will shift the alignment of any possessor gradually but inexorably to lawful evil, more rapidly the more often the rod is used.

Bensozia — (C, R, X) plus a brass scepter (4-16 damage per contact to all creatures of good alignment, 3-12 to devils, 2-8 to

others) and a diadem of beaten gold set in rubies (total value 26,000 gp).

Adramalech — (I, S, Z) plus a +2 *staff* that can *slay living* (save at +1 to avoid) by touch, and *disintegrate* (devils save at +1) by touch. Each power is usable at the wielder's will, but only once in every six turns, and only one power is usable within any round. (Note that all greater devils and archdevils are immune to the staffs powers.) He also may carry a tome known as the "Book of Fire" or the "Infernal Records" — composed of many folios and papers recording almost all diabolic truenames, known powers, actions, likes, dislikes, treasure, activities, means of summoning, and so forth.

Phongor — (Qx2, Z) plus many instruments of torture, and a cat-of-nine-tails of 9 wire strands, which does 1-4 damage plus venom effects (see erinyes entry in Monster Manual for details).

Buer — (H, Qx4) plus a +2 *mace* and a +1 *bow* (with 20 arrows).

Bune — (I, Qx10, W, Z)

Morax — (H, I, Y)

Rimmon — (Qx6, R)

Zagum — (C, P)

Baalberith — (W)

Alastor — (I, V) plus his double-bladed +4 *battleaxe* studded with 16 hellstones.

Martinet — (J, R)

Unique metals and talismans

The two metals unique to the hells are found in Phlegethos, Malbolge, Maladomini, and Nessus.

One of them is *arjale*. It is black in color, light in weight, easily worked to a smooth surface, and can be brought to razor-sharpness. If alloyed with iron, it becomes a light green-grey in color, and quite pliable (a metal sometimes called "dajavva").

The other is *tantulhor* (no relation to what we know as "tantalum"). It is about the weight of iron, can be worked into a smooth finish, and is apparently unbreakable — weapon blades fashioned of it will cut anything they touch, except stone.

Methods of forging and working these metals are unknown outside the hells — as,

by and large, are the metals themselves. Due to their rarity and properties, such metals will bring very high prices if shrewdly sold on the Prime Material Plane.

The rod of Dispatier is known to be made of tantulhor, and Moloch's whip is of dajava. The talismans of many devils — Agares, Asmodeus, Barbatos, and Buer, for certain — are known to be fashioned of arjale, and most others are suspected to be of tantulhor (so far, Zagan's talisman and the talisman for all barbed devils have been specifically identified as of tantulhor; note that both of these talismans have a number of barbs that will cut anything but stone).

The compositions of a few other talismans are known: the talisman for all bone devils is a hook of bone (origin unknown); the talisman for all malebranche is of obsidian; and the talismans of Belial, Morax, and Zepar are of polished brass.

The devils' dark agents

Here follows a very brief summary of those creatures who actively further diabolic causes on the Prime Material Plane(s). These are of two types: agents (who obey, and spend much of their time working for, the devils), and allies (who will and do cooperate with devils to further common causes or in return for sufficient reward).

The most important diabolic agents on the Prime Material Plane are the dominant race of the plane — humans. Both individual humans (particularly lawful evil magic-users who can summon devils from the Lower Planes to the Prime Material) and devil-worshipping groups (such as lawful evil priesthoods of the diabolic) exist, and they are the backbone of diabolic influence on the Prime Material. They deal either directly with devils or through intermediaries such as dark nagas, hell cats, imps, and the like. Such intermediaries can command nightmares, mephits, and so on for their own use.

These intermediaries can also deal with equivalent races in cold regions (frost men), swampy areas (some tribes of muckdwellers), and in the sea (sahaguin, and the few lawful evil sirine). Other types of creatures also dealt with by the intermediaries are dragons (the green and blue varieties; lawful evil dragonkind, who will obey Tiamat directly, or orders attributed to Tiamat brought by a devil or known intermediary creature) and the subterranean races (meenlocks and mites), who are sometimes ruled through another rank of intermediaries, such as medusae.

In turn, all of these human-and-equivalent races command more stupid creatures (both lawful evil creatures such as manticores, and those of neutral alignments) which they can force, goad, or train into service. Humans of sufficient talents can create undead (skeletons and zombies) to serve them, and such creatures as scarecrows and homunculi. The truly loyal diabolic servants are few in number, but rely in

most situations upon the allies they can call upon for fighting strength and weight of numbers.

Such allies include beholders (and in the sea, eyes of the deep); the goblin races (goblins, orcs, hobgoblins) and kobolds; some tribes of muckdwellers; some wererats (and in turn, normal rats); some fire giant bands; some ogre magi, annis, and greenhags; some intelligent undead (such as wraiths, spectres, mummies, wights, penanggalans, ghosts, and poltergeists); a few liches and adherers; some duergar settlements; some men (mercenaries, LE non-diabolic priesthoods, and their worshippers); and screaming devilkin. They in turn have servant creatures and allies they can call upon: "The arm of Asmodeus is long," as the saying goes, "longer than you think."

Some lawful evil creatures are so self-interested that they rarely, if ever, cooperate with the devils' dark agents. These include the aboleths, the (lawful evil) githyanki, and the illithids (mind flayers).

Details and precise dispositions of diabolic agents will vary from Prime Material Plane to ("parallel"/alternate) plane — that is, from campaign to campaign. But there should be one constant — the enigmatic, "watchdog" devil Gargoth:

GARGOTH (Arch-devil)

FREQUENCY: *Unique (Very rare)*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -6

MOVE: 16"/20"

HIT DICE: 177 *hit points*

% IN LAIR: Nil

TREASURE TYPE: *See below*

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type +7*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 90%

INTELLIGENCE: *Supra-genius*

ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*

SIZE: L (8' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 311

Attack/Defense Modes: *All/all*

Gargoth, "The Lord Who Watches" (sometimes misnamed by sages as "Ashtaroth"; a name properly applied to a demon prince of great-power), was once a mighty power in the hells, second only to Asmodeus himself. For untold eons, however, he has resided elsewhere — most believe on the Prime Material Plane — and has become little more than a legend both in the hells and on the Prime Material Plane. He is real, however, and very powerful. The reason for the departure of Gargoth from the hells is unknown. Some sages say he challenged Asmodeus and was driven into exile; others say that he left upon the destruction of his closest friend, Beherit, at the hands of Asmodeus (see the following section, "Of the nature of devils"). One or both of these reasons may be true.

It is certain that Gargoth is a loner; his



few servants are undead and other creatures he can control with his *charm monster* ability (he favors snakes and blue dragons). He cannot *summon* any devil, and never openly works with the devils or their agents. He dislikes revealing himself, preferring to work behind the scenes or in disguise. Of all the devils, he has the strongest sense of humor, and possesses a wily intelligence and acting ability that rival those of Asmodeus himself.

The activities and aims of Gargoth on the Prime Material Plane are similar to those of the devils and their agents — not surprising, considering his alignment and upbringing, but some devils (notably Mephistopheles and Adramalech) believe that Gargoth and Asmodeus are staunch allies, as friendly together as devils ever get, and that Gargoth works to further their common ends from concealment outside the hells, serving in part as a "watchdog" on the activities and loyalties of "official" servants of the hells, and the devils themselves, on the Prime Material Plane. Certainly he has never supported another archdevil in any bid to unseat Asmodeus — although he is continually sought after for that end by the ambitious dukes, due to his great personal power — and when a devil meets with Gargoth, Asmodeus eventually knows what has befallen.

Gargoth can employ the following spell-like powers at will, one at a time and once per round: *pyrotechnics*, *produce flame*, *wall of fire*, *fireball* (4d6), *ice storm*, *dispel magic*, *detect lie*, *detect magic*, *detect invis-*

ibility, ESP, beguile, geas, know alignment, read magic, read languages, tongues, identify, shapechange, charm monster, raise dead, and (fulfill another's) limited wish. His gaze causes confusion (as in the spell), his breath causes fear (a cone 2" long and 1" wide at its farthest extent, usable once every 2 rounds), and at will he can surround himself with a nimbus of choking, caustic, sulphurous fire (save vs. breath weapon or lose consciousness for 1-6 rounds) affecting all creatures within a 10' radius. It causes 1-6 points of fiery damage (save for half damage), and will ignite paper, clothing, and other combustibles.

Once per day Gargoth can use a *symbol of insanity* or of *pain* (one or the other, not one of each), and once per day he can *transmute metal into gold*. Using this latter power, he can change any refined metal except silver (i.e., any implement, crude forging, weapon, etc., but not raw ore) by touch into gold (no volume limit, but the weight of the metal to be changed cannot be more than 600 gp). This takes 1 round, and other substances touching, or attached to, the metal(s) to be turned are entirely unaffected. The gold produced is very pure — and thus soft and crumbly — but will conform to the shape and disposition of the metal it replaces exactly. Thus a hook holding a heavy cauldron, if turned to gold (Gargoth can so control his power that he could choose to change only the hook, and not the attached chains and cauldron, if he

so wishes — or change all three, even if they are all made of different metals) would break off, twist, and crumble away immediately, dropping the cauldron to earth. Broken items will be transmuted into broken gold items, not whole items. If any magic item is transmuted, the transformation "drinks" the magical charge, leaving the item bereft of all dweomer. Gargoth's power of transmutation can only be successfully used when he is in full control of his senses (i.e., a psionically or magically controlled Gargoth could not turn baser metals into gold).

Gargoth can breathe in water, and take in gases poisonous to men without apparent effect, and is immune to *charm*, *sleep*, and *hold* spells of any type. Poisons (including venom) do not seem to affect him, but silver weapons are known to do him double damage. Mere contact with silver does him 1-3 points of damage. (A bag of silver pieces hurled at Gargoth once nearly slew him.) He regenerates 2 hit points per round.

Gargoth has no known lair (it is likely that he has many, and is often on the move, concealed by his illusions — see the Monster Manual for spell-like powers common to all devils). Gargoth can strike with his naked fists for 2-8 damage each in a round, or employ any weapon except one made of, or adorned with, silver. He will seek to destroy, bury, or drown silver objects so they can never be used against him.

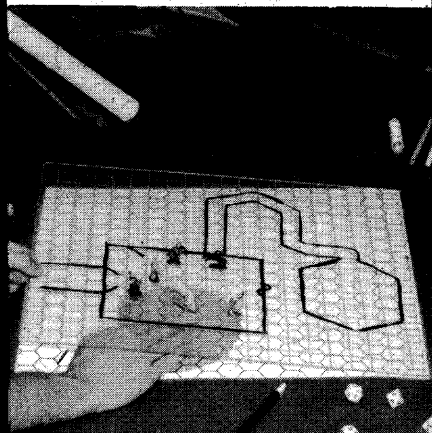
Gargoth cannot be *summoned* by any devil

or conjurer, although he can be compelled to service by the same spells that affect other devils if he is encountered.

Sages say that Gargoth possesses an ability unique among devils (an ability that causes some to argue that he is not a devil at all): he can *plane shift* once every 9 days, apparently freely about the known planes of existence, for he has been seen far from the Prime Material Plane.

Gargoth usually appears as a handsome, 8'-tall man of indeterminate mature age, with noble features, a soft, low voice, and a mustache. He wears swash-topped boots, jerkins with slit and puffed sleeves, velvet-lined cloaks and similar finery, and usually carries treasure equal to Qx4 in the form of huge, sparkling knuckle rings, pendants, buckle ornaments, and cloak pins. In his voluminous sleeves, and slipped down his boots, Gargoth usually carries 4-6 throwing knives, and he can juggle these with a showman's skill and flair if he wishes. Sometimes he adopts the guise of a nondescript trader or an old pilgrim, but only rarely appears as a female creature. He has more self-control, and thinks in a more strategic fashion, than any other devil — his sense of humor tempers his thinking and reactions in situations where even Asmodeus would fly into a rage. He is an awesome foe, and if he preferred to rule the hells rather than walk his own path, the present Overlord's days might well be numbered. Gargoth sees himself as more powerful, and far more intelligent — cer-

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tainly less rash — than the present hierarchy of hell, and therefore above them in rank, and free to choose his own role and way — he is lawful evil, but he is himself the lawmaker. He is on friendly terms with Asmodeus, whom he sees as the most capable of the archdevils — and is known to respect also Alastor, Bifrons, and Mephistopheles. He views only Asmodeus and Alastor as anything approaching equals, and sees Mephistopheles as a young, rash, inexperienced replica of himself. DMs please note: Gargoth will reveal nothing of his personal thoughts on such things, to anyone, under any circumstances. He will always speak with detachment, dispassionately and reflectively, and often pretends to beliefs and emotions to mislead and manipulate his audience of the moment.

He is so skillful at this that he can elicit obedience from even the vainest of creatures, such as the (lawful evil, green or blue) dragon. Gargoth customarily employs a large, adult or older blue dragon as his steed (one, named Rathguul, he has grown very fond of, and often engages in riddle-games with), and often bears a giant poisonous snake (such as a pit viper) wrapped about his arm (see the Monster Manual for effects of the snake's poisonous bite). Gargoth has been known to cast this snake at nearby foes, or atop sleeping or preoccupied men or orcs, for his own amusement.

Of the nature of devils

To understand the hierarchy of the hells and how it works — and to know how properly to deal with and defeat the diabolic — it is necessary to know something of the nature and biology of devils. Unfortunately, this is a subject rife with mystery, misunderstanding, and wild, often false speculation as far as most Prime Material Plane observers are concerned — and it must largely remain so. What little is known of the nature of devils follows hereafter.

All lesser and non-unique greater devils derive their physical forms and powers from the archdevils. These mighty lawful evil beings alone possess the power to transform or “shape” devilkin, a somewhat mysterious process whereby an archdevil by an act of concerted will and direct physical and mental contact with a lawful evil spirit, lemure, larva, or devil can permanently *shapechange* that being into an undead or lawful evil creature of any sort (including diabolic form).

The Overlord has the means (see below) to enforce his own limitations on the use of this power; by such tradition, for example, only he creates pit fiends. And although any archdevil has the time and potential “raw material” (lemures, stench kine, hell hounds and the like) to create legions of devils, they are rarely allowed to do so.

Lawful evil souls and spirits come to Avernus via the Astral Plane, and wander freely through the hells, until noticed and mentally “bound” (*charmed*) by an arch-

devil. Any number can be bound (and are controlled as a cleric controls animated undead) until needed for shaping. The shaping process takes 1 round per hit die of the form being created, and must be commenced with a particular end result in mind (and once begun, followed through to that result — i.e., the shaper cannot change his mind about what is desired in the midst of the process, although an unsatisfactory result can be reshaped anew). An archdevil can do nothing else while shaping (for it commands all his attention) and is thus vulnerable during this time.

Advances in the personal power of a diabolic spirit cause it to be rewarded with a more powerful form and a more influential position, and eventually such a spirit with continued growth would rise into the ranks of the greater devils, becoming in turn a styx devil, malebranche, ice devil, and pit fiend.

The essential difference between lesser and greater devils is that the spirits of the latter are of sufficient power (lawful evil loyalty, mental/psionic development, self-will and self-control) to take a distinctive name. By doing so, such spirits protect themselves from the caprices of archdevils, for the very name of a named spirit determines its form, and so a given spirit cannot be ousted from its form, nor shaped into another diabolic form without its cooperation (although an archdevil of sufficient strength can always give another devil the choice of cooperation or utter destruction). Thus, an ice devil is always an ice devil; an archdevil can give it a replacement form of an ice devil or even a lesser creature if its own form is lost, but cannot demote it in form without its cooperation.

Greater devils always derive their own new name when they have developed sufficiently; then they seek out an archdevil to grant them such a higher form (typically pledging limited loyalty to the archdevil in return for the bestowal of a new form). To advance beyond the status of a pit fiend requires an anima (soul or spirit) of unusual lawful evil strength and finely honed powers — powers that apparently are served best, and serve the hells best, when matched with a unique personal form; therefore, much of the hierarchy of the hells consists of devils of unique forms and powers, despite the strict regimentation of lower ranks.

The most intelligent devils, and the most loyal to Asmodeus, are the consorts; the Overlord allows only certain loyal spirits to take this form, thereby limiting possible treachery, and protects the consorts from unwanted attentions of other devils and diabolic creatures — on pain of destruction or exile (see the description of Rumjal above). The consorts can see and appreciate the strategy of Asmodeus, and consider him a fair and astute Overlord, much better at ruling the hells than any of the other archdevils would be, except perhaps Mephistopheles. Glasya, daughter of Asmodeus and one of the most influential consorts, does not always see eye to eye with her

father, but thinks and acts in a like manner to him, and thus supports him continually.

However, none of the consorts can afford to be complacent. In comparison to their male counterparts and underlings such as pit fiends, they are relatively weak in physical and magical powers. Their survival depends upon continued usefulness to, and being in the good graces of, Asmodeus and their respective archdevil mates. Among the ranks of the “outcast” unique devils are several she-devils who could readily be elevated to the position of consort, to replace an unwanted or destroyed incumbent. These include Duskur and Malarea, described above. At least one consort, Batna (and her mate the archdevil Beherit, the former ruler of Malbolge), has been utterly destroyed by Asmodeus for disobeying his restrictions upon the elevation of devils.

Asmodeus alone has the power and knowledge to alter the truename of a lawful evil creature; it is largely this power that enabled him to become master of the hells, and that leads some to consider him a deity. It is also this ability that enables him to exile devils, by ending their ability to answer a *summons*.

Asmodeus carefully maintains his rule over the Nine Hells, and as carefully nurtures the strength of his domain, keeping it close-knit and individually strong by limiting its hierarchy, holding the pit fiends loyal to (and beholding to) him personally by threat of destruction or exile and by promise of elevation to the hierarchy as a reward. Such advancement is rare, coming only when a vacancy is created in the hierarchy by the utter destruction or exile of an archdevil or a unique greater devil (most of whom are dukes).

Exile of a rebellious devil involves the taking of a new name and form; the former unknown to the Prime Material Plane summoners, and the latter having diabolic censure and comparatively feeble powers — all resulting in practical imprisonment on the plane of exile. The outcasts of the hells have been exiled to Avernus, and collectively are known as the “rabble of devilkin,” although many remain quite powerful. Note that a rebellious styx, horned, or ice devil, or pit fiend must be elevated to unique form to be exiled; more often, such are merely destroyed.

The body of a devil slain on a plane other than one of the Nine Hells will slowly begin to burn, regardless of temperature, oxygen, or surroundings, giving off first thick, oily smoke, then a rising, crackling burst of orange and sickly yellow through green-hued flame, which gives off little heat but consumes the carcass in a puff of smoke and shower of sparks (within a ten-foot radius), leaving nothing but a sulphurous, brimstone stench. Combustion begins 6 rounds after death, and is complete at the end of 9 rounds after the devil (or at least its physical form) is slain.

A *speak with dead* spell cast upon a devil outside of the Nine Hells will have no effect. If cast upon the corpse of any slain devil

while in the hells (diabolic bodies do not spontaneously combust in the hells, but rather lie to rot, usually being eaten before long), *Speak with dead* will bring the spellcaster into direct communication with the archdevil who rules the plane (and if that archdevil has itself been slain, into communication with Asmodeus himself). This occurs regardless of the archdevil's location and activities at the time; the archdevil will hear all questions (and any other words uttered by the spellcaster while the spell is in effect — it retains normal duration), and may — it is not compelled to — answer, or speak something else, which may be a message, threat, or order, but not a spell, in reply.

All unique greater devils (including archdevils) who suffer destruction of their form on a plane other than their own will flee the place and plane of their slaying as disembodied spirits, travelling astrally back to their home plane. There they can seize control of any lemure, casting out the spirit therein, and make the form their own. Greater devils endure nine decades of torment in lemure form before being granted their old form back. Archdevils can slowly shift forms back to their own form, but it takes a decade before an archdevil can regain the ability to leave its own plane at will.

Traveling the Styx

Recently information has come to light (Monster Manual II, p. 28, *Daemon (Charon)*) that the river Styx spans the Lower Planes, with branches flowing through the topmost layers of Pandemonium, the Abyss, Tarterus, Hades, Gehenna, and Acheron, and culminating in an ocean on Stygia, the fifth plane of the Nine Hells. The river Lethe in Nessus, nethermost of the Nine Hells, may well be one of its branches, but the waters of Lethe have slightly different effects (see DRAGON issue #76, p. 32) than those of the Styx.

Note that although the Styx appears as a deep, swift, unfordable torrent, the river never seems to "go anywhere"; its source(s) have never been found, and although its waters rush in one direction or another (remaining consistent only while within a given plane), it never empties nor floods its banks. Although an observer journeying to Stygia on it will find that it falls from the mountains, flowing ever slower, to end in a swamp and apparently boundless ocean, Charon or a charonadaemon will take its skiff somehow through the swamp and pass on to another plane without having to climb back out of Stygia's encircling mountains. In similarly confusing fashion, a boat on the Styx may pass on from plane to plane in an apparently random fashion, coming upon Acheron, Pandemonium, and the rest in any order — one knowing the Styx's branches well could pass from any of the Lower Planes (topmost layers only, except for Stygia) to any other of the topmost



Lower Planes. This may not be so, for only Charon and the charonadaemons know the Styx well. It is certain that the branches of the Styx enter the Astral, Ethereal, and Prime Material Planes, and that Charon and his charonadaemons, in their skiffs, can travel them freely, regardless of current or plane traveled into or across.

Note that Charon and the charonadaemons are immune to the effects of the waters of the Styx (or of the Lethe, if doused with them), and if attacked by a passenger, or if a passenger seeks to steal its goods — including stealing back the fare paid — the daemonic boatmaster will typically capsize its craft deliberately, towing it away — for Charon and his charonadaemons are strong swimmers (18" move) and can at will exercise *water breathing* and *water walking* (18" move) and care nothing for breaking bargains that someone on the other end of has already violated — recovering its treasure, righting its skiff, driving off its former passengers, and sailing on. Passengers could thus find themselves stranded. Should they later raise treasure or the means to make a suitable sacrifice (see *Monster Manual II*, p.29), and then summon Charon or a charonadaemon again, however, they begin with a clean slate; Charon and his servants hold no grudges as long as the fare is paid, and will take aboard beings they have fought previously.

Charon and the devils largely ignore each other. Charon and the charonadaemons will never speak to or attack a devil, and only archdevils or greater devils would ever approach or attack such a creature, or the passengers in its skiff. In such a case, Charon or a charonadaemon would seek to defend itself (*not* its passengers) and *plane shift* via the Styx to another plane immediately. The skiffs of such daemons do not seem affected by fire- or cold-based (and most other spell) attacks.

As far as the hells are concerned, this means that the easiest road to the hells is via the Styx, for if it can be found on the Prime Material Plane and the fee paid, an admittedly perilous route to the hells is opened. The Styx passes eventually into Avernus, and thence to Stygia, before passing on to other planes. No devil except a greater devil or archdevil will touch the boatmaster or any passenger until they leave the skiff, in either Avernus or Stygia — although lesser devils often find and travel with such a skiff, waiting for the passengers to alight. Any greater devil or archdevil attacking passengers — which they will do usually only when the passengers are fleeing with treasure belonging to the archdevil or greater devil (or the greater devil's archdevil master) — will ignore Charon or the charonadaemon, who will in turn ignore the devils, poling steadily onward, although behind him his passengers may be slain or torn from the skiff. Such attacks rarely damage or upset the skiff — if they do, Charon or the charonadaemon *will* strike back.

Anyone summoning a skiff to escape from the hells will find that the boatmaster

will not tight for them nor carry anything aboard — except its fee — but will not waste time or attract undue attention, either. Lesser devils will rarely attack beings dealing with, or in the presence of, Charon or a charonadaemon, except from a distance (i.e., by the use of missiles or spells). Neither Charon nor a charonadaemon will take a passenger "on credit" or upon the promise of being paid at the destination — if you lack the fee up front, you will not be allowed aboard. Note that charonadaemons will not take most devils aboard — for only the styx devils (see the FIEND FOLIO® Tome) can pass out of the Lower Planes by using the plane-spanning powers of the Styx or of such a skiff, hence their name.

The boatmasters of the Styx will readily take non-diabolic lawful evil creatures if the fee is paid, including achaerai, barghests, daemons, hell cats, hell hounds, hordlings, mephits, and rakshasas. Note that the boatmaster will not police its passengers; if they fight among themselves, it is not its affair, unless they attack it or its boat, and a party of human adventurers could well find themselves sitting with a pair of styx devils — or fighting them savagely in a small, precarious, open boat!

Mounts, including nightmares, are difficult to transport. They must be blindfolded and made to lie down, and for the inconvenience and the space required Charon and his charonadaemons will charge triple fare for such creatures, in addition to the fee for their rider (or owner, if a pack animal). If a boat has insufficient spaces left when summoned, the party must let it go and summon another, or split up; no boatmaster will evict a passenger who has not yet reached his or her destination to make room for another. If they did this, almost no one would seek passage with them, and so this is an inflexible rule: even if a charonadaemon intends to later betray a passenger by delivering him to the wrong place or by leading him into an ambush, it will never force any passenger out unless that passenger attacks it. If a charonadaemon docks at a place known by its passengers to be wrong, and they refuse to get out of the boat, it will not attack them (unless they attack it), but rather wait for a time, and if the passengers also wait patiently, will move on to the proper place (if they seem too strong to overcome) or to another wrong destination or ambush (if the passengers seem weak). A boatmaster will never attack first. Note that Charon himself will *never* betray passengers by leading them into ambush or to a wrong destination.

Mention should be made of another route into the hells: Pazuzu (see *Monster Manual II*, p. 41) will carry a summoner (a servant or a being he hopes to gain as a servant in this way) to the hells in return for a service to be performed in the hells, or later — usually, as he is also called to bring the being back out of the hells, it costs two services! (A less expensive way to venture alone to the hells may be to take Pazuzu in, and Charon or a charonadaemon out again.

Travelers are advised to avoid the busy season.)

Note to the DM

In conclusion, a much-needed reminder to *Dungeon Masters* handling devils in play: devils are too often misused. The legions of the hells may seem small in numbers when compared to the goblin races, men, and demons, but they are both mighty and numerous when compared to a party of adventurers — or even an army of invaders. Player characters entering the hells will have to wade through almost all of an archdevil's legions (thousands of strong, organized devils, enthusiastic and/or fanatical and/or afraid of punishment if they perform poorly, and fighting on their "home ground") before even seeing the archdevil (unless the party has that archdevil's talisman). Greater devils send lesser devils to do their bidding, and call on aid from higher ranks only if hard pressed. No player should ever be able to boast of his or her character slaying Asmodeus in his very throneroom in Nessus, or for that matter, outsmarting any archdevil!

The distressingly widespread tendency to mishandle devils and other powerful monsters so that players can overcome them too easily cheapens any AD&D® campaign, and ultimately the interest and pride of player-character achievements therein. Bear in mind also that no PC or NPC, however learned, will ever know fully and accurately the powers of devils and the details of the Nine Hells as presented in "The Nine Hells" (*DRAGON* issues #75 and #76) and herein: all available diabolic information should be scanty, distorted, and often wildly inaccurate. Seekers after such knowledge may well attract the attention of diabolic agents (see above), too.

Note also that treasure taken from the hells will be actively sought by devils and their agents (both to bring about its recovery, and the destruction of those who took it), and that gems in their natural state found in the hells do not resemble cut, polished gems; extensive knowledge (lapidary secondary skill, or the knowledge of a dwarven miner) may be required even to recognize them.

Research into the diabolic continues — and probably never will be complete. Perhaps there are some things men were not meant to know, and certainly many will die trying to learn more — for what is still mysterious lies in the innermost nature and workings of the Nine Hells, and the sane and wise do not inquire too closely of such matters. Wherefore, this treatise is at an

END

ZARIEL

Zariel rules Avernus, the first layer of the Nine Hells. Once a mighty angel charged with watching the tides of the Blood War, she succumbed to the plane's corrupting influence and fell from grace. She recently reclaimed her position as archdevil of Avernus after the cautious Bel proved inadequate at marshaling his forces to launch offensives against the encroaching demons. Now Bel advises her and helps her manage the war, though many whisper that her true agenda is vengeance against Asmodeus, and her true plan is to drive him from the Nine Hells.

All who enter and exit the Nine Hells must pass through Avernus, so the infernal armies muster on this layer. Here, the amnizus guard the citadels overlooking the River Styx, much of the fighting of the Blood War takes place, and devils gather to invade the Abyss. Anyone hoping to reach the lower layers must first contend

with the darkness of this layer and the myriad threats it houses. Zariel manages it all and has the ultimate say over who comes and goes.

Given her role in the Blood War, Zariel is keenly interested in collecting souls from the greatest warriors on the Material Plane and securing their loyalty. She bargains hard, and mortals end up worse for dealing with her, because she holds all the cards. A bargain with Zariel is eternal; there is little hope of wriggling out of it. However, she does expect the best from her servants, and so she allows her mortal followers to live out their lives, ever honing their talents, so she can put them to the best use when she finally calls in their debts. As a result, Zariel's servants are universally effective, disciplined, and dangerous.

ZARIEL

Large fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 21 (natural armor)

Hit Points 580 (40d10 + 360)

Speed 50 ft., fly 150 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
27 (+8)	24 (+7)	28 (+9)	26 (+8)	27 (+8)	30 (+10)

Saving Throws Int +16, Wis +16, Cha +18

Skills Intimidation +18, Perception +16

Damage Resistances cold, fire, radiant; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 26

Languages all, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 26 (90,000 XP)

Devil's Sight. Magical darkness doesn't impede Zariel's darkvision.

Fiery Weapons. Zariel's weapon attacks are magical. When she hits with any weapon, the weapon deals an extra 36 (8d8) fire damage (included in the weapon attacks below).

Innate Spellcasting. Zariel's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 26). She can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *alter self* (can become Medium when changing her appearance), *detect evil and good*, *fireball*, *invisibility* (self only), *wall of fire*

3/day each: *blade barrier*, *dispel evil and good*, *finger of death*

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Zariel fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead.

Magic Resistance. Zariel has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Regeneration. Zariel regains 20 hit points at the start of her turn. If she takes radiant damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of her next turn. Zariel dies only if she starts her turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Zariel attacks twice with her longsword or with her javelins. She can substitute Horrid Touch for one of these attacks.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d8 + 8) slashing damage, or 19 (2d10 + 8) slashing damage if used with two hands, plus 36 (8d8) fire damage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d6 + 8) piercing damage plus 36 (8d8) fire damage.

Horrid Touch (Recharge 5–6). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 44 (8d10) necrotic damage, and the target is poisoned for 1 minute. While poisoned in this way, the target is also blinded and deafened. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Teleport. Zariel magically teleports, along with any equipment she is wearing and carrying, up to 120 feet to an unoccupied space she can see.

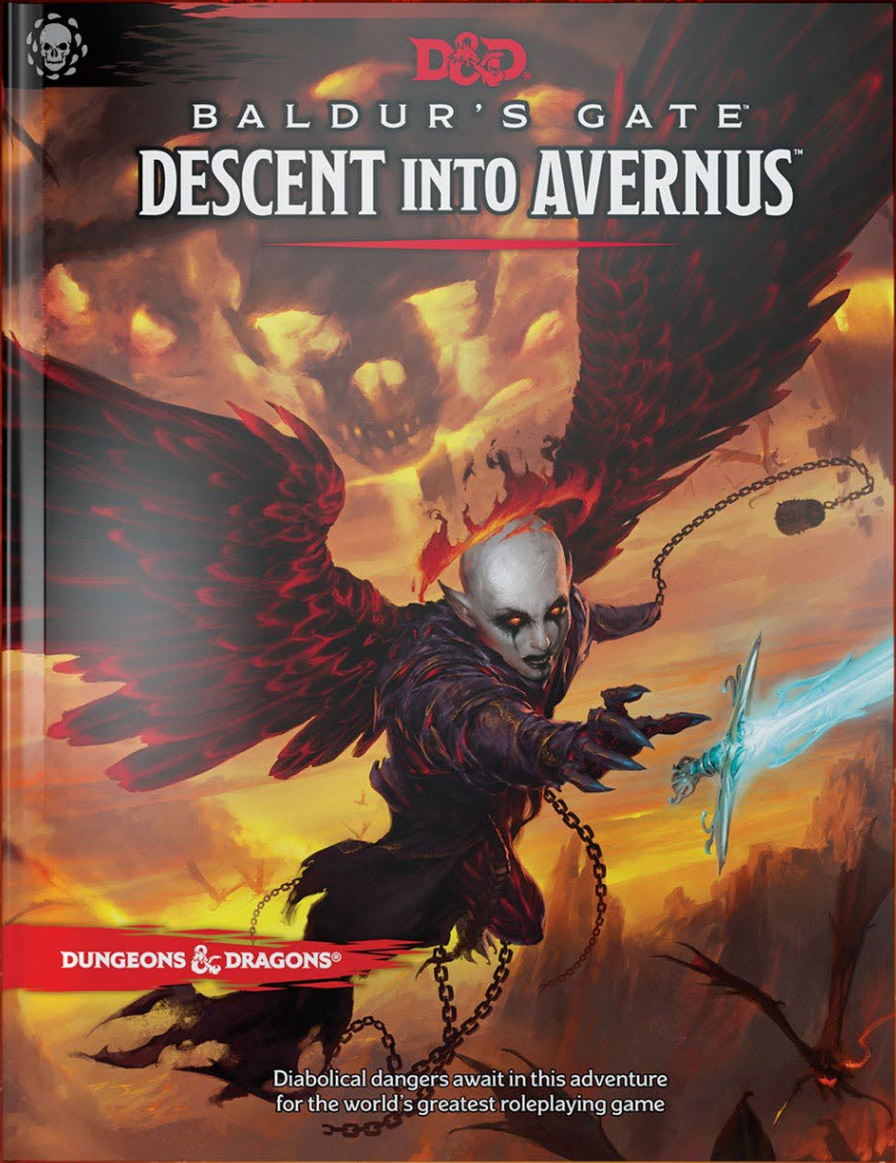
LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Zariel can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Zariel regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

Immolating Gaze (Costs 2 Actions). Zariel turns her magical gaze toward one creature she can see within 120 feet of her and commands it to combust. The target must succeed on a DC 26 Wisdom saving throw or take 22 (4d10) fire damage.

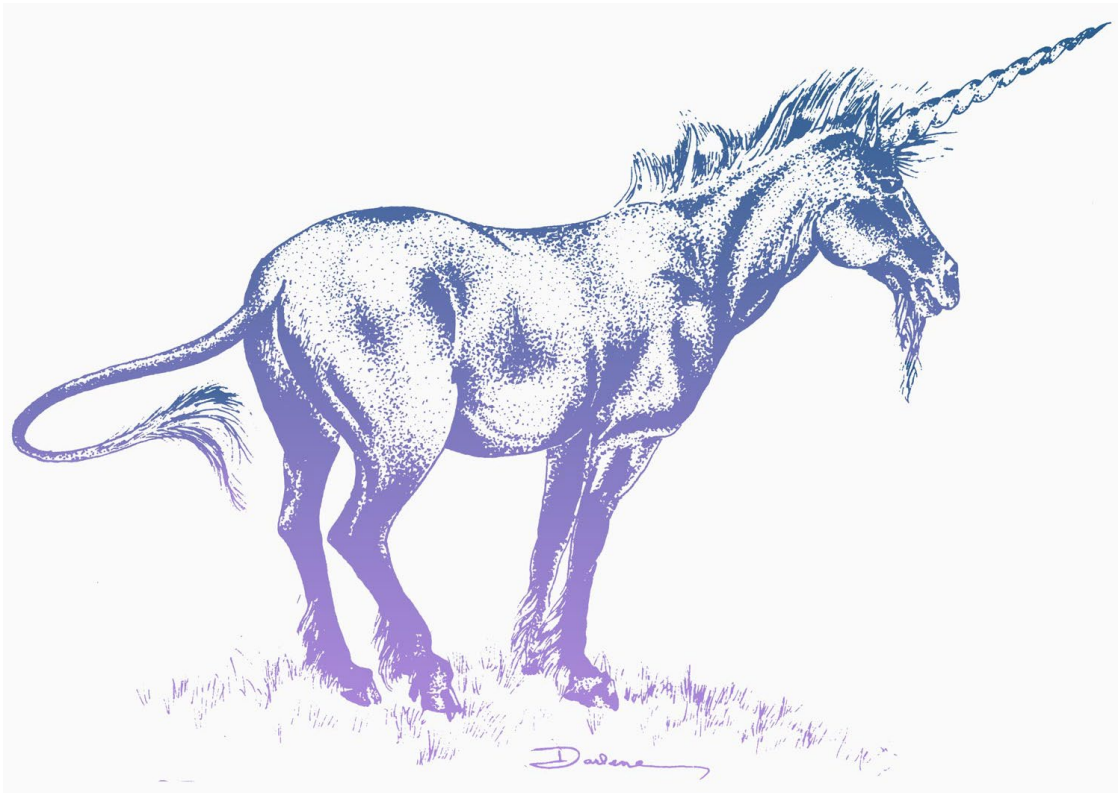
Teleport. Zariel uses her Teleport action.

DIABOLICAL DANGERS
AWAIT



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Monsters and Fables

Executive Producer Jennifer Kretchmer and
Dungeon Master T.J. Storm open the book on
their fairy tale-inspired stream Monsters &
Fables.

“I have to, every day, abstract myself into a
language of fable and monsters to try to
manage and understand what the world
means.”

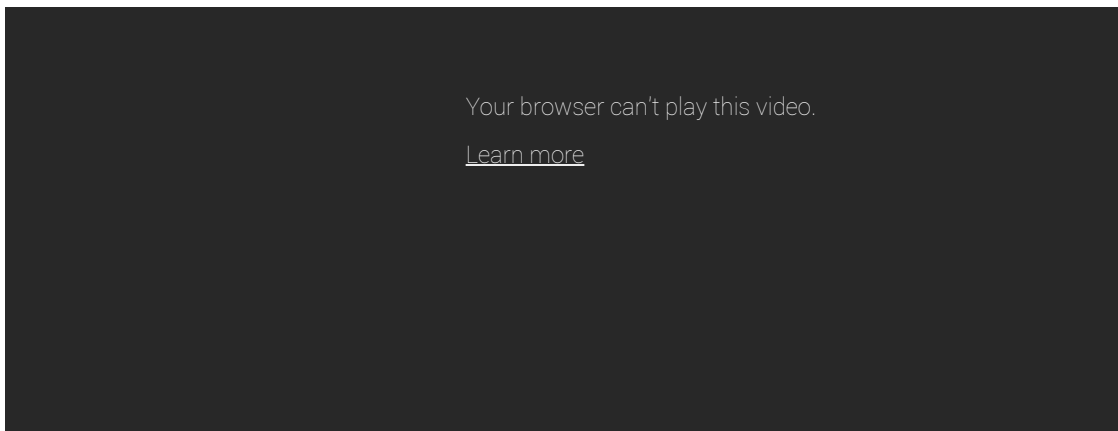
-Guillermo del Toro



When you're putting together a campaign, stories can come from many places. You may look to your favorite TV show where factions fight for an uncomfortable metal seat, bring the pages of a novel following a brooding, dual-wielding dark elf to life, or pluck action scenes straight from pulp Saturday morning matinees. The *Monsters & Fables* episodic stream looks a little further back for its inspiration, yet also remains completely modern thanks to its use of fairy tales, as those stories continue to influence our culture today.

"I had been playing around with ideas for a campaign based on fairy tales for a while. I love fairy tales and mythology, especially the way cultures use those archetypes to represent various social spheres and cultural norms. I was a literature major in school so I'm very much into the idea that there are only seven stories," says Jennifer Kretchmer, Executive Producer of *Monsters & Fables*, referencing the theory of the seven major plots: overcoming the monster; rags to riches; the quest; voyage and return; rebirth; comedy; and tragedy. "It's hard to tell a story, especially a heroic story, that doesn't in some way go back to these touchstones of cultures throughout the ages. So *Jaws* is really a form of Beowulf. That gives us a great narrative through line to really make our own."





The original fairy tales themselves weren't the only initial inspiration, as Kretchmer is also fascinated by artistic representations of these classic characters: "I had seen the different approaches people had taken to those archetypes in D&D and I had collected some fun pictures of those. It seems like that clicked for T.J. and myself and we started talking."

"Jen showed me a bunch of pictures of fairy tale heroes made into art," confirms T.J. Storm, who acts as Dungeon Master for *Monsters & Fables*. "One specifically was Snow White. When I saw her I knew liked this idea and I dived into the research and started jotting down notes. It just blew up from there. We found a few characters and stories which seemed like they could get along in our world and threw them in together. It was a lot of fun."



(Select to view)

Fun is an interesting way to describe the source material that serves as inspiration for *Monsters & Fables*. Modern-day versions of fairy tales, for all their remaining darkness, have often been toned down for today's audiences. If you've never ventured beyond the Disney version of a story, the Brothers Grimm have more than a few surprises in store for you.

"My favorite stories are ones that most people don't even know exist, like Grimm's *The Juniper Tree*. That is really, really dark and twisted," says Kretchmer. "Today people don't know that most of those stepmothers in the modern version of the tales started out as biological mothers in the original telling. They don't know how Cinderella's stepsisters end. Those are definitely things we tap into as we form our own new stories."

"Fairy tales can be absolutely horrifying. When I was doing my research, I learned that Rumpelstiltskin literally tears himself apart. So we actually had to pull back," adds Storm. "Even though we're playing in a fantasy genre where you regularly kick in doors and kill the orcs, it was too dark. We couldn't go to that place. Instead we tried to find the middle ground where it would have a touch of that original story but still be fun."



(Select to view)

SPINNING A TALE

With Storm at the helm as the DM and Kretchmer playing Rapunzel herself, *Monsters & Fables* looked to other veteran film and TV performers to complete its party of lost heroes. Francis Capra (*Veronica Mars*), Rachel Miner (*Supernatural*), and Omar Najam (*Thank You for Questing*) banded together as Aladdin, Little Red Riding Hood, and Mowgli to battle mythic foes, explore frightful new lands, and become the stuff of legend. Some of those characters immediately lent themselves to certain D&D character classes.

“When we were building Mowgli we instantly saw him as a barbarian, while Prince Al ad-Din—which is the annunciation of Aladdin—was absolutely a rogue. We took a few liberties for Rapunzel because she has a deeper story background, while Little Red Riding Hood was made slightly older and found her father’s profession to become a ranger,” Storm tells *Dragon+*.

The pair say one of the one of the biggest pluses of this project is how spectacular their players have been. “Rachel Miner is so excited and so focused when she gets into character. She’s says, ‘Okay, I’m going deep’ and she goes bananas!” Storm reveals. “Francis has got such an incredible spirit as Aladdin. He would try to keep that in place even against the odds and would always say, ‘We can do this!’ And Omar Najam who plays Mowgli was the surprise in-game star. He comes out of nowhere and adds so much fun.”



“Omar stole the show,” Kretchmer acknowledges, adding high praise for Storm’s performance as DM. “The variety of characters, monsters, and creatures T.J. embodies just blew us all away. And his narration and how tangible he makes the world is extraordinary. It’s a treat to watch.”

Kretchmer also hopes the show will remove some of the stigma attached to disability. She and Miner are both openly disabled—Jennifer has Ehlers Danlos Syndrome while Rachel has MS—and they are keen to act as advocates for inclusion and access.

“Disability representation in media is *abysmal*. Even Orcus would be shaking his head and saying, ‘Wow, gang. That’s pathetic.’ So to have one—much less two! —openly disabled people together on a show is exceedingly rare. We both are very proud to be helping dismantle stereotypes and narratives around disability.”

AGE APPROPRIATE

The cast’s ability to bring those characters to life seems even more impressive given the young age of their heroes. Not only do they have to navigate the already perilous world of Dungeons & Dragons,

they have to deal with the fact it has been mashed up with the twisted lore of fairy tales, where their age has its own impact.

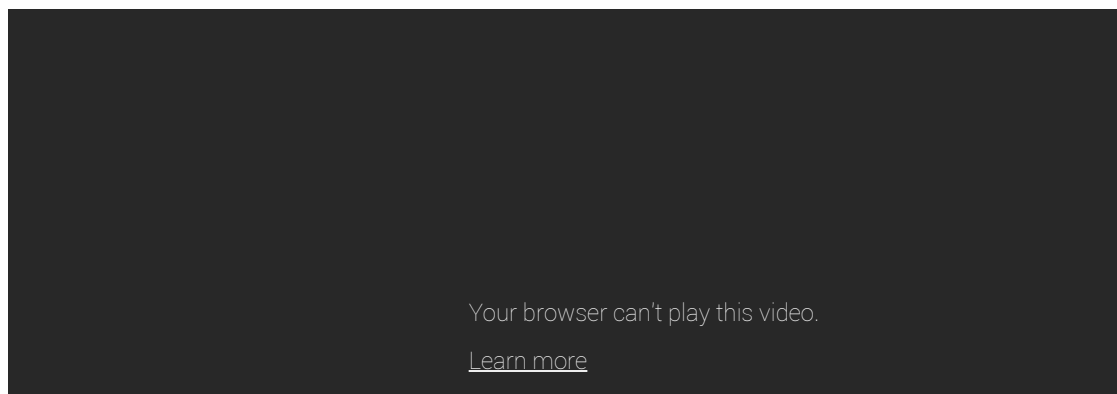
In most games the group has played or DMed, players tended to create young adult characters, so skewing even younger than that made for a really interesting twist. But it also created an editorial dilemma, considering how incredibly dark and torturous the original Grimm fairy tales could be, compared to what would be suitable and appropriate for young characters in the game.

“Something big is happening in the world and there’s been a huge change. Our four fairy tale characters find themselves at an orphanage because they’re so young and have to band together out of necessity,” adds Storm. “Like all fantasy, especially when you’re gaming, they find themselves in over their heads in a world that’s bigger than they are because they’re just kids. It just gets increasingly wild from there.

“There is a ‘Big Bad’ in this world but they don’t reveal themselves until much later in the story. But when you’re a child, any situation is bigger than you and could be considered a big bad, because ever antagonist is greater. They’re always dealing with something beyond themselves.”

CHAPTER & VERSE

With backgrounds in both scripted and unscripted television, Kretchmer, producer Taylor Bibat, and director Giles Andrews decided to give the production an episodic feel. The show was broken up into chunks between forty minutes and an hour to make them easy to digest, with the six episodes being followed by a session at *D&D Live 2019: The Descent*.





“The great benefit is that viewers don’t need to lock in for four hours to see a show in one sitting or have to catch up on hundreds of hours of previous streaming. It’s much more view on demand, like a regular television show,” Kretchmer says. “That also allowed our extraordinary and busy cast to come together in a shorter span of time, instead of needing them to have availability every single week for an extended period.”



(Select to view)

She says it also gave the production team some interesting freedoms in how they built the show, to make sure the story arcs were engaging and the narrative came through in those self-contained episodes. Previous experience working on game shows and in reality television had prepared Kretchmer, editor Najam and director Andrews for exactly that kind of scenario.



Fate Deck

Eagle-eyed *Monsters & Fables* viewers will have noticed both players and non-player characters drawing from a deck of *Magic: The Gathering* cards whenever they score a critical fail or a critical success. It's a homebrew mechanic that T.J. Storm has borrowed from his home games.

“We called it the ‘Fate Deck’ in the show. Essentially, on a roll of one or twenty the player or DM pulls from a large deck of *Magic* cards, which was 300+ cards for our shoot. The DM then uses the name and artwork on the chosen card to inspire the resolution of the current circumstance or decide how a future moment plays out, at his discretion. It adds an additional element of randomness and spontaneity to the game.”

“We are all familiar with working with footage that may not necessarily form the most coherent story and figuring out how to piece it together to really make that work. Here we had the benefit of working with an incredible group of storytellers and also having T.J. really help us find the narrative,” she says. “The other ace we had up our sleeve is that Omar is one of our editors and obviously I’m executive producing. So we had two people who were involved in either pre-production or post-production sitting at that table, which

really helped us chart the story and remember which moments were the most emotionally resonant.”

“Jennifer is also a veteran of Dungeons & Dragons and knows how to play the game,” Storm adds. “If anyone had questions or needed help from a knowledge standpoint, they could always lean on her. She knows the rules and she also understands the tone and how to keep it in that place, which helps immensely.”

Even with all of that help at the table, this is still Dungeons & Dragons and anything can happen. Was Storm worried his party might wander off towards the shiny thing over there and ignore his story beats?

“They always wander off towards the shiny thing. That’s D&D,” he says with a laugh. “And I have to be honest, they found ways that I did not see coming to defeat my obstacles. I’m like, ‘Wait, what? Don’t you want to kill it? Why don’t you want to kill it?’ I did not see that coming. But that’s the game right there and that’s what makes it so much fun. You can laugh and enjoy the choices they make as they’re problem solving, even though they’re creating a different kind of problem for me.”

Download a .zip of [three character sheets](#).

You can watch *Monsters & Fables* on the [official D&D YouTube channel](#) and connect with [T.J. Storm](#), [Francis Capra](#), [Jennifer Kretchmer](#), [Rachel Miner](#), and [Omar Najam](#) on Twitter.

BACK TO TOP

Mowgli

CHARACTER NAME

Barbarian 5

CLASS & LEVEL

Wildhunt

RACE

Outlander

BACKGROUND

Wresdan

PLAYER NAME

6,500

EXPERIENCE POINTS

STRENGTH

+2

14

DEXTERITY

+3

16

CONSTITUTION

+2

14

INTELLIGENCE

+0

10

WISDOM

+2

14

CHARISMA

+1

12

- ☐ +5 Strength
- ☐ +3 Dexterity
- ☐ +5 Constitution
- ☐ +0 Intelligence
- ☐ +2 Wisdom
- ☐ +1 Charisma

Saving Throw Modifiers

Advantage on DEX against effects that you can see while not blinded, deafened, or

SAVING THROWS

- ☐ +3 Acrobatics DEX
- ☒ +5 Animal Handling WIS
- ☐ +0 Arcana INT
- ☒ +5 Athletics STR
- ☐ +1 Deception CHA
- ☐ +0 History INT
- ☐ +2 Insight WIS
- ☐ +1 Intimidation CHA
- ☐ +0 Investigation INT
- ☐ +2 Medicine WIS
- ☒ +3 Nature INT
- ☒ +5 Perception WIS
- ☐ +1 Performance CHA
- ☐ +1 Persuasion CHA
- ☐ +0 Religion INT
- ☐ +3 Sleight of Hand DEX
- ☒ +6 Stealth DEX
- ☒ +5 Survival WIS

SKILLS

+3

INITIATIVE

ARMOR

15

CLASS

DEFENSES

INSPIRATION

+3

PROFICIENCY BONUS

ABILITY SAVE DC

40 ft. (Walking)

SPEED

Max HP

Current HP

Temp HP

50

--

HIT POINTS

Total 5d12

HIT DICE

SUCCESSSES

FAILURES

DEATH SAVES

=== ARMOR ===

Light Armor, Medium Armor, Shields

=== WEAPONS ===

Martial Weapons, Simple Weapons

=== LANGUAGES ===

Common, Sylvan

PROFICIENCIES & LANGUAGES

=== ACTIONS ===

Standard Actions

Attack, Cast a Spell, Dash, Disengage, Dodge, Help, Hide, Ready, Search, Use an Object, Opportunity Attack, Grapple, Shove, Improvise, Two-Weapon Fighting, Interact with an Object

=== BONUS ACTIONS ===

Mark the Scent • 1 / Short Rest

Mark a creature within 10 ft. Double your proficiency bonus for any ability check to find the creature, and you always know the location of it if it is within 60 ft.

Rage • 3 / Long Rest

As a bonus action enter a rage for up to 1 minute

(10 rounds).

You gain advantage on STR checks and saving throws (not attacks), +2 melee damage with STR weapons, resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, slashing damage. You can't cast or concentrate on spells while raging.

Your rage ends early if you are knocked unconscious or if your turn ends and you haven't attacked a hostile creature since your last turn or taken damage since then. You can also end your rage as a bonus action.

Shifting • 1 / Short Rest

Once per short rest as a bonus action, you can assume a more bestial appearance. This

ACTIONS

15

PASSIVE WISDOM (PERCEPTION)

12

PASSIVE WISDOM (INSIGHT)

10

PASSIVE INTELLIGENCE (INVESTIGATION)

Darkvision 60 ft.

SENSES

NAME

HIT

DAMAGE/TYPE

NOTES

Dagger

+6

1d4+3 Piercing

Simple, Finesse, Light, Thrown, Range (20/60)

Dagger

+6

1d4+3 Piercing

Simple, Finesse, Light, Thrown, Range (20/60)

Moon-Touched Sword, Scimitar

+6

1d6+3 Slashing

Martial, Finesse, Light

Unarmed Strike

+5

3 Bludgeoning

WEAPON ATTACKS & CANTRIPS

Mowgli

CHARACTER NAME

Barbarian 5

CLASS & LEVEL

Wresdan

PLAYER NAME

Wildhunt

RACE

Outlander

BACKGROUND

6,500

EXPERIENCE POINTS

=== BARBARIAN FEATURES ===

* Hit Points • PHB 47

* Proficiencies • PHB 47

* Rage • PHB 48

As a bonus action enter a rage for up to 1 minute (10 rounds).

You gain advantage on STR checks and saving throws (not attacks), +2 melee damage with STR weapons, resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, slashing damage. You can't cast or concentrate on spells while raging.

Your rage ends early if you are knocked unconscious or if your turn ends and you haven't attacked a hostile creature since your last turn or taken damage since then. You can also end your rage as a bonus action.

| 3 / Long Rest • 1 Bonus Action

* Unarmored Defense • PHB 48

While not wearing armor, your AC equals 10 + DEX modifier + CON modifier + any shield bonus.

* Reckless Attack • PHB 48

When you make your first attack on your turn, you can decide to attack recklessly, giving you advantage on melee weapon attack rolls using STR during this turn, but attack rolls against you have advantage until your next turn.

* Danger Sense • PHB 48

You have advantage on DEX saving throws against effects that you can see while not blinded, deafened, or incapacitated.

* Primal Path • PHB 48

| Path of the Totem Warrior

* Spirit Seeker • PHB

You can cast beast sense and speak with animals as rituals.

* Totem Spirit • PHB

You have adopted a totem spirit.

| Wolf • PHB

While you're raging, your allies have advantage on melee attack rolls against any hostile creature within 5 feet of you.

* Ability Score Improvement • PHB 49

* Extra Attack • PHB 49

You can attack twice, instead of once, whenever you take the Attack action on your turn.

* Fast Movement • PHB 49

Your speed increases by 10 ft. while you aren't wearing heavy armor.

=== WILDHUNT RACIAL TRAITS ===

* Darkvision • WGtE

You can see in dim light within 60 ft. as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

* Keen Senses • WGtE

You have proficiency with the Perception skill.

* Shifting • WGtE

Once per short rest as a bonus action, you can assume a more bestial appearance. This transformation lasts for 1 minute, until you die, or until you revert to your normal appearance as a bonus action. When you shift, you gain +7 temp HP and additional benefits that depend on your shifter subrace.

| 1 / Short Rest • 1 Bonus Action

* Natural Tracker • WGtE

You have proficiency with the Survival skill.

* Mark the Scent • WGtE

Mark a creature within 10 ft. Double your proficiency bonus for any ability check to find the creature, and you always know the location of it if it is within 60 ft.

| 1 / Short Rest • 1 Bonus Action

* Shifting feature • WGtE

While shifted, you have advantage on Wisdom checks.

FEATURES & TRAITS

	NAME	QTY	WEIGHT	NAME	QTY	WEIGHT
CP	0					
	Dagger	1	1 lb.			
	Dagger	1	1 lb.			
SP	0					
	Moon-Touched Sword, Scimitar	1	3 lb.			
EP	0					
GP	0					
PP	0					
WEIGHT CARRIED						
5 lb.						
ENCUMBERED						
210 lb.						
PUSH/DRAG/LIFT						
420 lb.						
ATTUNED MAGIC ITEMS						
QTY WEIGHT						

EQUIPMENT



Mowgli

CHARACTER NAME

Male	11	Medium	5'0"	72
GENDER	AGE	SIZE	HEIGHT	WEIGHT
Chaotic Good	The Pack. Ther	Sun baked brov	Soil Rich Brown	Panther Black
ALIGNMENT	FAITH	SKIN	EYES	HAIR

CHARACTER APPEARANCE

=== Allies ===

My pack... although... perhaps my leaving was for the best... but now I... might have a... new pack... we shall see...

The little Prince smells like spices... more so when he lies...

The one with long golden fur (Rapunzel) smells of sunlight...

The Red Swathed female... she's my favorite. I like this one. This one smells of apples and bread and budding flowers... I trust this one...

The old one. (Father Grimm) He smells of... tears...

And the quiet less old one (Brother Grimm) He smells of... Brimstone... odd... He never moves, never blinks... Perhaps he is waiting for something...

The Cat is funny; I like him. He smells of cooked spiced meat... We talk often.

That bird... he smells of blood and tar... I wish the cat would eat him once and for all...

=== Organizations ===

ALLIES & ORGANIZATIONS

I was, in fact, raised by wolves.
I watch over my friends as if they were a litter of newborn pups.

PERSONALITY TRAITS

Greater Good. It is each person's responsibility to make the most happiness for the whole tribe.

IDEALS

My family, clan, or tribe is the most important thing in my life, even when they are far from me.

BONDS

Don't expect me to save those who can't save themselves. It is nature's way that the strong thrive and the weak perish. I am slow to trust members of other races, tribes, and societies.

FLAWS

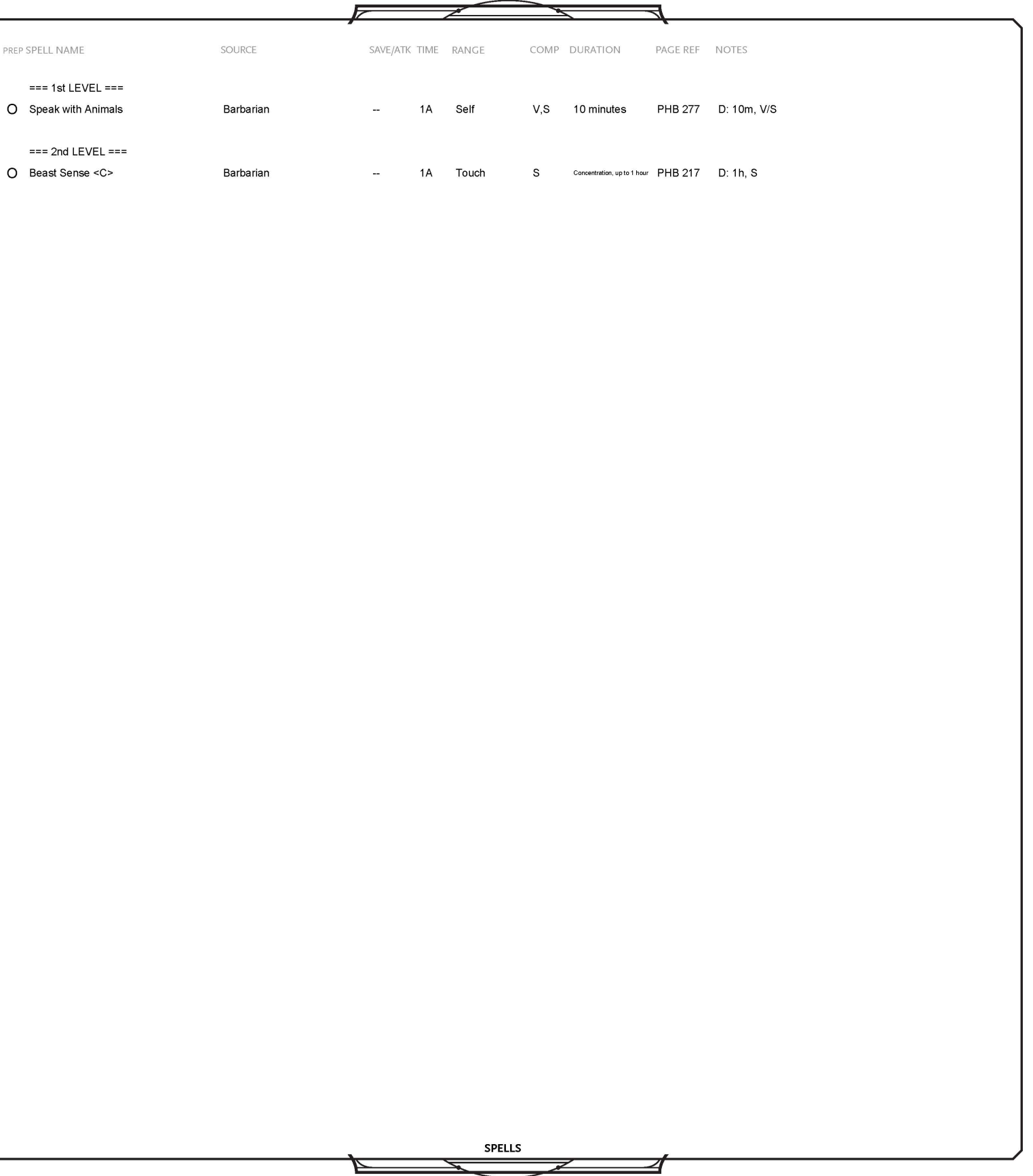
(Story notes. Please watch Andi Serkis's Mowgli on Netflix for prelife up until Mowgli leaves the pack for the lands of man).

In my 10th winter I approached the lands of men and was taken captive and made to live in a cage, too small to stand up in. I have been in this cage for 3 years now... but I have learned their language... This pack calls itself a circus and people, many of the man people come to look at me and throw me scraps of burnt food...

CHARACTER BACKSTORY

BONUS LANGUAGE: Can speak the language of Predatory jungle/forest animals well enough.

ADDITIONAL NOTES



Rapunzel

CHARACTER NAME

Warlock 5
CLASS & LEVEL

High Elf
RACE

Hermit
BACKGROUND

Wresdan
PLAYER NAME

6,500
EXPERIENCE POINTS

STRENGTH

+1

13

DEXTERITY

+1

13

CONSTITUTION

-1

9

INTELLIGENCE

+2

15

WISDOM

+0

10

CHARISMA

+2

15

- ☐ +1 Strength
- ☐ +1 Dexterity
- ☐ -1 Constitution
- ☐ +2 Intelligence
- ☐ +3 Wisdom
- ☒ +5 Charisma

Saving Throw Modifiers

Advantage against being charmed, and magic can't put you to sleep
Advantage made to maintain your concentration on a spell when you take damage

SAVING THROWS

- ☐ +1 Acrobatics DEX
- ☐ +0 Animal Handling WIS
- ☒ +5 Arcana INT
- ☐ +1 Athletics STR
- ☐ +2 Deception CHA
- ☐ +2 History INT
- ☐ +0 Insight WIS
- ☐ +2 Intimidation CHA
- ☒ +5 Investigation INT
- ☒ +3 Medicine WIS
- ☐ +2 Nature INT
- ☒ +3 Perception WIS
- ☐ +2 Performance CHA
- ☐ +2 Persuasion CHA
- ☒ +5 Religion INT
- ☐ +1 Sleight of Hand DEX
- ☐ +1 Stealth DEX
- ☐ +0 Survival WIS
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

SKILLS

+1

INITIATIVE

ARMOR

12

CLASS

DEFENSES

INSPIRATION

+3

PROFICIENCY BONUS

ABILITY SAVE DC

30 ft. (Walking)

SPEED

Max HP

Current HP

Temp HP

23

--

HIT POINTS

Total

5d8

HIT DICE

SUCCESSSES

FAILURES

DEATH SAVES

=== ARMOR ===

Light Armor

=== WEAPONS ===

Longbow, Longsword, Shortsword, Simple Weapons

=== TOOLS ===

Herbalism Kit

=== LANGUAGES ===

Celestial, Common, Elvish, Infernal

PROFICIENCIES & LANGUAGES

=== ACTIONS ===

Standard Actions

Attack, Cast a Spell, Dash, Disengage, Dodge, Help, Hide, Ready, Search, Use an Object, Opportunity Attack, Grapple, Shove, Improvise, Two-Weapon Fighting, Interact with an Object

=== REACTIONS ===

War Caster

You can use your reaction to make an opportunity attack to cast a spell that has a casting time of 1 action and targets only that creature.

=== SPECIAL ===

Dark One's Blessing

When you reduce a hostile creature to 0 HP, you

gain 7 temp HP.

ACTIONS

13

PASSIVE WISDOM (PERCEPTION)

10

PASSIVE WISDOM (INSIGHT)

15

PASSIVE INTELLIGENCE (INVESTIGATION)

Darkvision 60 ft.

SENSES

NAME

HIT

DAMAGE/TYPE

NOTES

Dagger

+4

1d4+1 Piercing

Simple, Finesse, Light, Thrown, Range (20/60)

Eldritch Blast

+5

1d10+2 Force

Count: 2, WIS, you can push the creature up to 10 feet away from you in a straight line.

Unarmed Strike

+4

2 Bludgeoning

WEAPON ATTACKS & CANTRIPS

Rapunzel

CHARACTER NAME

Warlock 5

CLASS & LEVEL

High Elf

RACE

Hermit

BACKGROUND

Wresdan

PLAYER NAME

6,500

EXPERIENCE POINTS

=== WARLOCK FEATURES ===

* Hit Points • PHB 106

* Proficiencies • PHB 107

* Otherworldly Patron • PHB 107

You have struck a bargain with an otherworldly being.

| The Fiend

* Pact Magic • PHB 107

You can cast known warlock spells using CHA as your spellcasting modifier (Spell DC 13, Spell Attack +5). You can use an arcane focus as a spellcasting focus.

* Expanded Spell List • PHB 109

Additional spells are added to the warlock spell list for you.

* Dark One's Blessing • PHB 109

When you reduce a hostile creature to 0 HP, you gain 7 temp HP.

| Special

* Eldritch Invocations • PHB 107

You learn fragments of forbidden knowledge that imbue you with an abiding magical ability.

| Agonizing Blast • PHB 110

When you cast eldritch blast, add +2 to the damage it deals on a hit.

| Repelling Blast • PHB

When you hit a creature with eldritch blast, you can push the creature up to 10 feet away from you in a straight line.

| Voice of the Chain Master • PHB

You can communicate telepathically with your familiar,

perceive through its senses, and speak through it in your own voice as long as you are on the same plane of existence.

* Pact Boon • PHB 107

Your otherworldly patron bestows a gift upon you for your loyal service.

| Pact of the Chain • PHB

You learn the find familiar spell, it doesn't count against your number of known spells, and you can cast it as a ritual. Your familiar can take on a more powerful form, and when you take the Attack action, you can forgo one of your own attacks to allow your familiar to make one attack with its reaction.

* Ability Score Improvement • PHB 108

=== HIGH ELF RACIAL TRAITS ===

* Darkvision • PHB 23

You can see in darkness (shades of gray) up to 60 ft.

* Keen Senses • PHB 23

You have proficiency in the Perception skill.

* Fey Ancestry • PHB 23

You have advantage on saves against being charmed, and magic can't put you to sleep.

* Trance • PHB 23

You don't need to sleep, but meditate semiconsciously for 4 hours a day. While meditating, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are actually mental exercises that have become reflexive through years of practice. After resting in this way, you gain the same benefit that a human does from 8 hours of sleep.

* Elf Weapon Training • PHB 23

You have proficiency with the longsword, shortsword,

shortbow, and longbow.

* Cantrip • PHB 24

You know one cantrip of your choice from the wizard spell list. INT is your spellcasting ability for it.

* Extra Language • PHB 24

You can speak, read, and write one extra language of your choice.

=== FEATS ===

* War Caster • PHB 170

You have advantage on CON saving throws that you make to maintain your concentration on a spell when you take damage. You can perform the somatic components of spells even when you have weapons or a shield in one or both hands. You can use your reaction to make an opportunity attack to cast a spell that has a casting time of 1 action and targets only that creature.

| 1 Reaction

FEATURES & TRAITS

	NAME	QTY	WEIGHT	NAME	QTY	WEIGHT
CP	0	1	10 lb.			
	Leather	1	10 lb.			
	Dagger	1	1 lb.			
SP	13	1	3 lb.			
	Clothes, Common	3	18 lb.			
	Clothes, Fine	1	--			
EP	0	1	3 lb.			
	Small Knife	1	4 lb.			
	Rapunzel's Hair	3	--			
GP	0	1	--			
	Clothes of Mending	1	--			
	Books	1	--			
PP	0	1	--			
	Silver Candelabra	1	--			
	1/2 Block of Cheese	1	--			
WEIGHT CARRIED						
39 lb.						
ENCUMBERED						
195 lb.						
PUSH/DRAG/LIFT						
390 lb.						
				ATTUNED MAGIC ITEMS	QTY	WEIGHT
				Ring of Mind Shielding	1	--
				Fireball	1	--

EQUIPMENT



Rapunzel

CHARACTER NAME

Female		Medium	5'5"	102
GENDER	AGE	SIZE	HEIGHT	WEIGHT
Lawful Neutral	Grandma Gothel	Extremely fair s	Pale Grey	Golden & exti
ALIGNMENT	FAITH	SKIN	EYES	HAIR

CHARACTER APPEARANCE

=== Allies ===

Godmother Gothell is the only family, nay, the only person I have ever known... She brought me food and books every day and warned me of the great evils of the outside world... She taught be the ways of magic and wove the spells into my hair, which she warned me to NEVER cut lest I be defenseless&powerless... And then one day... she never showed up again...

Then a Prince showed up in my tower, chased by... something ... I saved him with my hair and he climbed right through the tiny window. The smallest Prince ever... not like in the storybooks... and so dark skinned... he says we must leave and thus... here I am... at the orphanage... The Little Prince is my... friend?

Father Grimm: Jakob Grimm, The Blind Priest of Illmater
Brother Grimm: Wilhelm Grimm, Catatonic former HellRider Paladin

=== Organizations ===

ALLIES & ORGANIZATIONS

I feel tremendous empathy for all who suffer.

PERSONALITY TRAITS

Live and Let Live. Meddling in the affairs of others only causes trouble. (Neutral)

IDEALS

I entered seclusion to hide from the ones who might still be hunting me. I must someday confront them.

BONDS

Now that I've returned to the world, I enjoy its delights a little too much.

FLAWS

Godmother Gothell is the only family, nay, the only person I have ever known... She brought me food and books to my tower every day and warned me of the great evils of the outside world... She gifted me with a ring that will shield me from those who would look for me, a beautiful ring that would keep me safe. She gifted me with the magic combs that she used to comb my hair and make it strong and beautiful. She taught be the ways of magic and wove the spells into my hair, which she warned me to NEVER cut lest I be defenseless&powerless... And then one day... she never showed up again...

Then a Prince showed up in my tower, chased by... something ... I saved him with my hair and he climbed right through the tiny window. The smallest Prince ever... not like in the storybooks... and so dark skinned... he says we must leave and thus... here I am... at the orphanage... The Little Prince is my... friend?

CHARACTER BACKSTORY

Grandma Gothell taught me the ancient elven art of folicromancy, weaving spells from one's hair. She combed my hair every single night with special combs (a ritual I continue today) and then braid my hair into intricate patterns that allow me to access the weave in ways not known to modern spellcasters. Grandma Gothell taught me that because my hair has never been cut, I can do things that others could never hope to do with magic. But she warned me that many others would covet the magic in my hair and would seek to cut it given the chance, to take my magic. I will never let them take my magic.

(Rapunzel's magic is tied to her hair:

1. Any somatic component can be done via her hair leaving her hands free to do other tasks.
2. Her eldritch blasts present as "hair attacks". She appears to whip her hair toward a target, striking with it.
3. Her hair comes alive and to her defense when used as a BLADE WARD or EXPEDITIOUS RETREAT where it appears to grab and pull her along for great speed.
4. Her hair acts as a rope of Climbing at will. She wears her hair down her back and around her waist until needed.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Warlock

SPELLCASTING
CLASS

CHA

SPELLCASTING
ABILITY

13

SPELL SAVE DC

+5

SPELL ATTACK
BONUS

PREP SPELL NAME	SOURCE	SAVE/ATK	TIME	RANGE	COMP	DURATION	PAGE REF	NOTES
=== CANTRIPS ===		(At Will)						
<input type="radio"/> Mage Hand	Warlock	--	1A	30 ft.	V,S	1 minute	PHB 256	D: 1m, V/S
<input type="radio"/> Eldritch Blast	Warlock	+5	1A	120 ft.	V,S	Instantaneous	PHB 237	V/S, you can push the creature up to 10 feet away from you in a straight line.
<input type="radio"/> Blade Ward	Warlock	--	1A	Self	V,S	1 round	PHB 218	D: 1Rnd, V/S
<input type="radio"/> Message	High Elf	--	1A	120 ft.	V,S,M	1 round	PHB 259	D: 1Rnd, V/S/M
=== 1st LEVEL ===								
<input type="radio"/> Arms of Hadar	Warlock	STR 13	1A	Self/10 ft. Sphere	V,S	Instantaneous	PHB 215	10 ft. Sphere, V/S
<input type="radio"/> Charm Person	Warlock	WIS 13	1A	30 ft.	V,S	1 hour	PHB 221	D: 1h, V/S
<input type="radio"/> Hex <C>	Warlock	--	1BA	90 ft.	V,S,M	Concentration, up to 1 hour	PHB 251	D: 1h, V/S/M
<input type="radio"/> Expeditious Retreat <C>	Warlock	--	1BA	Self	V,S	Concentration, up to 10 minutes	PHB 238	D: 10m, V/S
<input type="radio"/> Find Familiar	Warlock	--	1h	10 ft.	V,S,M	Instantaneous	PHB 240	V/S/M
=== 2nd LEVEL ===								
<input type="radio"/> Hold Person <C>	Warlock	WIS 13	1A	60 ft.	V,S,M	Concentration, up to 1 minute	PHB 251	D: 1m, V/S/M
=== 3rd LEVEL ===		2 Pact OO						
<input type="radio"/> Fireball	Warlock	DEX 13	1A	150 ft./20 ft. Sphere	V,S,M	Instantaneous	PHB 241	20 ft. Sphere, V/S/M

SPELLS

Blanchette "Red" De'erig

CHARACTER NAME

Ranger 5

CLASS & LEVEL

Variant Human

RACE

Folk Hero

BACKGROUND

Wresdan

PLAYER NAME

6,500

EXPERIENCE POINTS

STRENGTH

+1

13

DEXTERITY

+3

16

CONSTITUTION

+2

14

INTELLIGENCE

+1

13

WISDOM

+1

13

CHARISMA

+0

10

- ☐ +5 Strength
- ☐ +7 Dexterity
- ☐ +3 Constitution
- ☐ +2 Intelligence
- ☐ +2 Wisdom
- ☐ +1 Charisma

Saving Throw Modifiers

+1 Bonus on saves

SAVING THROWS

- ☐ +3 Acrobatics DEX
- ☒ +4 Animal Handling WIS
- ☐ +1 Arcana INT
- ☒ +4 Athletics STR
- ☐ +0 Deception CHA
- ☐ +1 History INT
- ☐ +1 Insight WIS
- ☐ +0 Intimidation CHA
- ☐ +1 Investigation INT
- ☒ +4 Medicine WIS
- ☒ +4 Nature INT
- ☒ +4 Perception WIS
- ☐ +0 Performance CHA
- ☐ +0 Persuasion CHA
- ☐ +1 Religion INT
- ☐ +3 Sleight of Hand DEX
- ☐ +3 Stealth DEX
- ☒ +4 Survival WIS
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

SKILLS

+3

INITIATIVE

ARMOR

16

CLASS

DEFENSES

INSPIRATION

+3

PROFICIENCY BONUS

ABILITY SAVE DC

30 ft. (Walking)

SPEED

Max HP

Current HP

Temp HP

44

--

HIT POINTS

Total 5d10

HIT DICE

SUCCESSSES

FAILURES

DEATH SAVES

=== ARMOR ===

Light Armor, Medium Armor, Shields

=== WEAPONS ===

Martial Weapons, Simple Weapons

=== TOOLS ===

Cook's Utensils, Vehicles (Land)

=== LANGUAGES ===

Common, Orc, Sylvan

PROFICIENCIES & LANGUAGES

=== ACTIONS ===

Standard Actions

Attack, Cast a Spell, Dash, Disengage, Dodge, Help, Hide, Ready, Search, Use an Object, Opportunity Attack, Grapple, Shove, Improvise, Two-Weapon Fighting, Interact with an Object

Hunter's Sense • 1 / Long Rest

As an action, choose one creature you can see within 60 ft. You immediately learn whether the creature has any damage immunities, resistances, or vulnerabilities and what they are if the creature is not hidden from divination magic. You can use this feature 1 times per long rest.

=== BONUS ACTIONS ===

Slayer's Prey

As a bonus action, you designate one creature you can see within 60 ft. and the first time each turn that you hit that target with a weapon attack, it takes an extra 1d6 damage. This benefit lasts until you finish a short or long rest or if you designate a different creature.

ACTIONS

14

PASSIVE WISDOM (PERCEPTION)

11

PASSIVE WISDOM (INSIGHT)

11

PASSIVE INTELLIGENCE (INVESTIGATION)

SENSES

NAME

HIT

DAMAGE/TYPE

NOTES

Berserker Battleaxe

+4

1d8+1 Slashing

Martial, Versatile

Handaxe

+4

1d6+1 Slashing

Simple, Light, Thrown, Range (20/60)

Handaxe

+4

1d6+1 Slashing

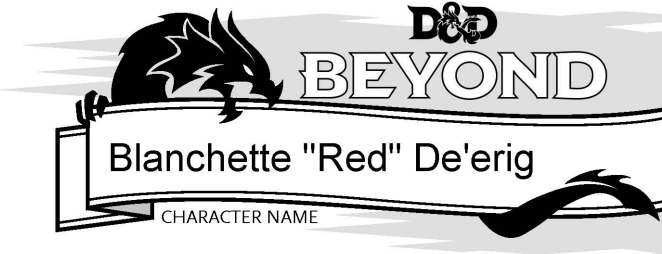
Simple, Light, Thrown, Range (20/60)

Unarmed Strike

+4

2 Bludgeoning

WEAPON ATTACKS & CANTRIPS



D&D BEYOND

Blanchette "Red" De'erig

CHARACTER NAME

Ranger 5		Wresdan
CLASS & LEVEL		PLAYER NAME
Variant Human	Folk Hero	6,500
RACE	BACKGROUND	EXPERIENCE POINTS

* Savage Attacker • PHB 169
Once per turn when you roll damage for a melee weapon attack, you can reroll the weapon's damage dice and use either total.

ADDITIONAL FEATURES & TRAITS

NAME	QTY	WEIGHT	NAME	QTY	WEIGHT
------	-----	--------	------	-----	--------

ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT



Blanchette "Red" De'erig

CHARACTER NAME

Female	14	Medium	5' 2"	101
GENDER	AGE	SIZE	HEIGHT	WEIGHT
Lawful Good	Mielikki (Laws o	Caucasian	Green	RED
ALIGNMENT	FAITH	SKIN	EYES	HAIR

Red's name comes in part from her vibrant RED hair. It is said that the combination of green eyes and red hair is the devil's tool... true or not, Red's fiery hair color is matched well by her blazing temper which, when pushed to it's limit is akin to a bonfire... You have been warned.

CHARACTER APPEARANCE

=== Allies ===

The Huntsman. My Father. A Hell Rider and long ranger of the dark places. He teaches me how to protect people and fight, and long range, but he won't take me on the long ranges yet.

Brother Grimm. A Famous Hellrider and friend of my father. He said if something ever happened to both he and Mom, to find either the Hellriders or Brother Grimm. He's a great warrior and will help.

Father Grimm. He's blind but very very kind. I will help him with the many children he takes care of.

Rapunzel, she's weird and plays with her hair instead of making proper eye contact. But... there is something about her that reminds me of mother... we'll see...

The Little Prince, He's too small to be a prince! And he's bossy! And sneaky! And he lies... non stop! And I think he steals things! I should punch him in the... breath Red... Breath...

Mowgli. He... he is... blessed by Malar I think... He

ALLIES & ORGANIZATIONS

I judge people by their actions, not their words.
If someone is in trouble, I'm always ready to lend help.

PERSONALITY TRAITS

Respect. People deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. (Good)
Fairness. No one should get preferential

IDEALS

I have a family, but I have no idea where they are. One day, I hope to see them again.

BONDS

Father calls me "Little Red" not because of my (red) hair, he says, but because of my temper. He always says

FLAWS

I am Blanchette De-ereg (Dee Air Egg), (I hate that name!) My father calls me Little Red, as do most in the village. We live 5 miles outside of town, down by the River Chionthar. My father is a HELLRIDER, they call him the Huntsman, and monsters fear his Axe. He patrols the area from the Wood of Sharp Teeth all the way through the Fields of the Dead and all the way up to the Trollclaw Ford. My mother went to town for the market, that's when we heard it... the great silence. My Father said for me to stay home, but he pulled out the picnic basket, for "just in case." He said if he wasn't back by morning to go west as fast I could to Brother Grimm and tell him what happened. My father did not return... I took the basket as Father told me, and left...

CHARACTER BACKSTORY

My father has taught me about the Circle of life. On one side is Mielikki, and on the other Malar. And they circle around each other, always... he also taught me that nothing about the circle is fair... and THAT is the law of the Circle of Life....

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Ranger

SPELLCASTING
CLASS

WIS

SPELLCASTING
ABILITY

12

SPELL SAVE DC

+4

SPELL ATTACK
BONUS

PREP SPELL NAME	SOURCE	SAVE/ATK	TIME	RANGE	COMP	DURATION	PAGE REF	NOTES
=== 1st LEVEL ===		4 Slots OOOO						
<input type="radio"/> Hunter's Mark <C>	Ranger	--	1BA	90 ft.	V	Concentration, up to 1 hour	PHB 251	D: 1h, V
<input type="radio"/> Beast Bond <C>	Ranger	--	1A	Touch	V,S,M	Concentration, up to 10 minutes	EE 150	D: 10m, V/S/M
<input type="radio"/> Cure Wounds	Ranger	--	1A	Touch	V,S	Instantaneous	PHB 230	V/S
<input type="radio"/> Protection from Evil and Good <C>	Ranger	--	1A	Touch	V,S,M	Concentration, up to 10 minutes	PHB 270	D: 10m, V/S/M
=== 2nd LEVEL ===		2 Slots OO						
<input type="radio"/> Zone of Truth	Ranger	CHA 12	1A	60 ft./15 ft. Sphere	V,S	10 minutes	PHB 289	D: 10m, 15 ft. Sphere, V/S

SPELLS

The Best of the Dungeon Masters Guild

D&D Live 2019: The Descent took us straight to Hell! His mind dancing with infernal delights, Shawn Merwin braves the brimstone-tainted pages of the DMs Guild to deliver up a host of fiendish and demonic products.

Shawn Merwin



INFERNAL PLEASURES

One of the joys of running a campaign in an exotic location is providing new character creation options that make sense in that environment. A devil-slaying specialist may have scant opportunities to shine on the streets of Waterdeep, but the same character would

have their work cut out for them in an Avernus-based campaign.

As with any third-party publication, make sure your Dungeon Master allows all of the options—it is a DMs prerogative to adjust or restrict anything they feel is unbalanced. The following products offer character options for campaigns with ties to the infernal. Some options help characters fight against evil, while others may see them enticed by it....



Players Guide to the Blood War
Vol. 1 by David Stephens

Price: **\$3.95 (PDF)**

With six new subclasses, sixty-seven feats, forty-one spells, twenty-two magic items, four fighting styles, and ten additional eldritch invocations, this infernal *Players Guide* has something useful for every character at your table. Whether they want to taste evil (as with the Knight of Asmodeus martial archetype) or fight evil (using the Way of the Cleansing Fist monastic tradition), this product

contains imaginative and flavorful options to delight players of all varieties.

MORE INFO

Backgrounds of Faerûn: Children of the Planes by Bryan Holmes

Price: **\$0.99 (PDF)**

While this product contains new races, subraces, and backgrounds that touch on many different planes, some of the offerings speak directly to the infernal powers. Its many interesting



options range from the durzagon (a tiefling subrace of demon-touched gray dwarves) to the aasimar who oppose the evil of the lower planes. The durzagon isn't the only new tiefling subrace, with the tanarukk (demonic orcs) being

our personal favorite.

MORE INFO



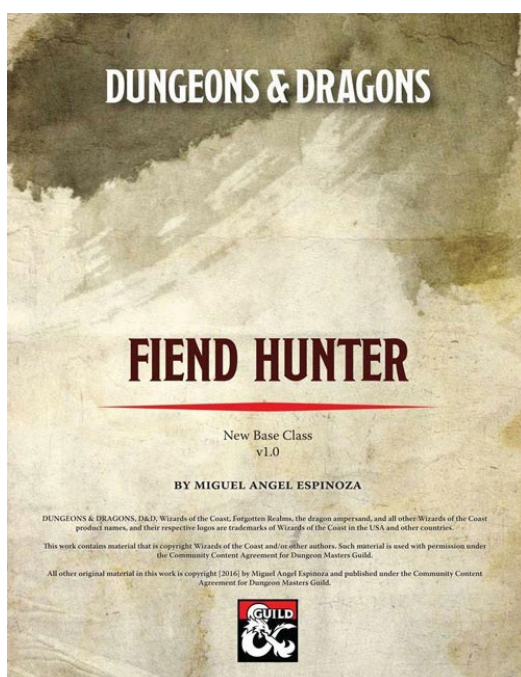
Sorcerous Origins from the Great Beyond by Peter Eccleston

Price: \$0.50 (PDF)

Peter Eccleston's work looks at three new sorcerous origins that would fit perfectly in a Hell-bound campaign: Abyssal, Infernal, and Celestial. What is most striking about these three origins is how differently they play from each other, and how expertly they match the feel of the creatures they are modeling. Abyssal origin sorcerers change over time to become more like the terrible beasts that spawned them; Infernal

sorcerers gain powers in an orderly yet devastating manner befitting their devilish background; while Celestial sorcerers gain powers and features that display the nobility and strength of their ancestry.

MORE INFO



Fiend Hunter by Miguel Angel Espinoza

Price: \$1.99 (PDF)

If you're going to take a jaunt to the underworld, it's best to stock up on the right weapons. And there's no better weapon against fiends than an honest-to-goodness fiend hunter. This new class brings to mind a cross between a ranger and a paladin, dedicated fully to the pursuit and destruction of the fiendish denizens of the Nine Hells and the Abyss. It has both a fighting style and a semi-spellcasting progression, giving

the flexibility of both martial and magical prowess. The fiend hunter comes with two subclasses: Path of the Demon Blood; and Path of the Soul Blade. The former uses the strength of an enemy against it, while the latter draws upon internal strength and holier virtues to imbue a favored weapon with the power to defeat the enemy.

MORE INFO

Emirikol's Guide to Devils by Sean McGovern

Price: \$15.00 (PDF)

This whopping 246-page guide to the Nine Hells is one of the best places to start if you are looking to venture into the depths of the underworld as either a player or DM. The maeluth race, a dwarf-devil hybrid, is just the start in a guide that includes additional player backgrounds, a new faction



called the Knights of the Chalice, player abilities for the Chosen of Asmodeus, and page after page of fresh magic items. Lashings of lore—including stats for more than 25 new monsters—and new plot seeds and frameworks for hellish campaigns make this a must-buy.

[MORE INFO](#)

CREATOR Q&A



The fantasy genre—and D&D in particular—has always fostered a strong connection between words and art. The iconic covers of books, boxes, and magazines move with the times and measure the progress of the game, while interior art for D&D books and adventures offers a new and different lens into the worlds where we play our games. Artist and writer Jason Thompson—who you may know from his incredible cartoon maps of major D&D adventures—shares his experiences with the game, his work on the DMs Guild, and reveals where his work will take him next.

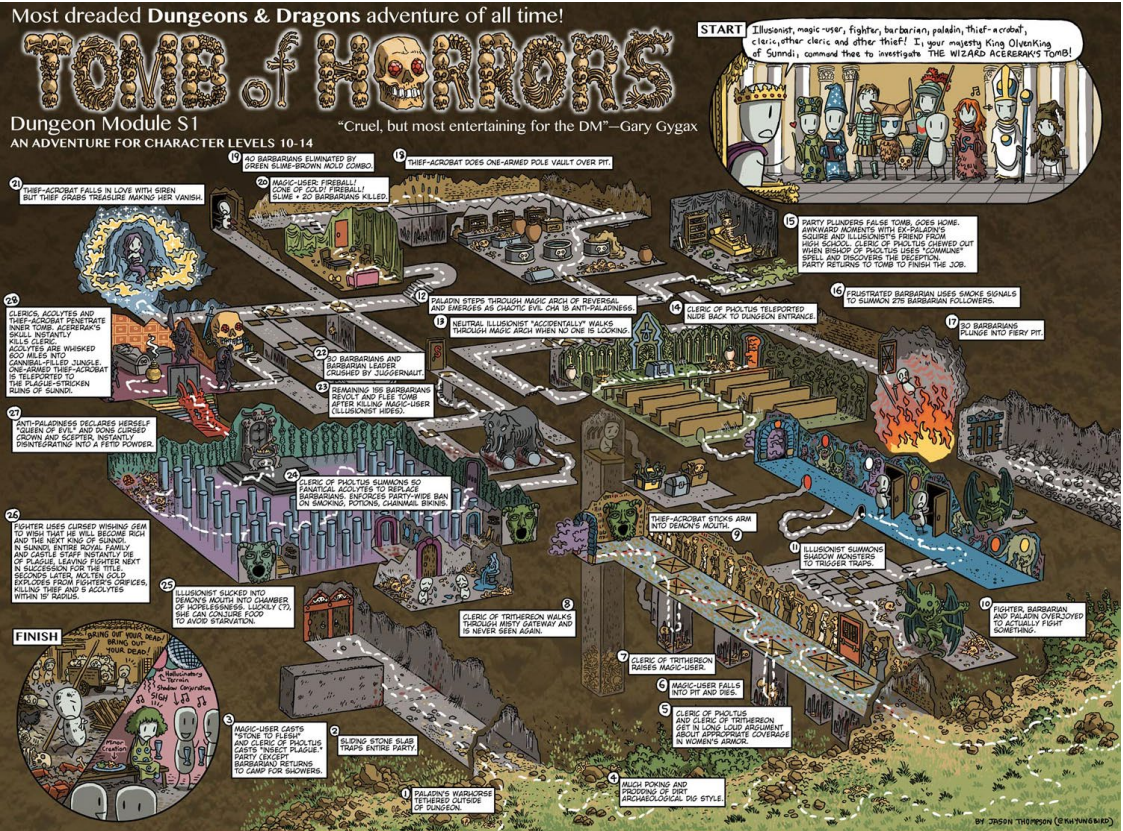
When did you first start playing D&D, and what kept you playing? I first played D&D when I was about eight-years-old, using the *Basic D&D Boxed Set* with art by Erol Otus. The idea that you could play “make-believe” as an organized activity with rules and dice blew my mind, and I’ve been roleplaying ever since. Most recently, my friends and I just finished a four-year campaign in a fantasy setting resembling ancient Babylon, which I’ve been [blogging about](#).

We love your amazing and hilarious D&D walkthrough maps. How did those projects come about, and what did you learn working on them?

The D&D Walkthrough Maps started in 2013 when Wizards released *Dungeons of Dread*, which included classic first edition D&D adventures *Tomb of Horrors*, *White Plume Mountain*, *Expedition to the Barrier Peaks* and *The Lost Caverns of Tsojcanth*. At the time I was doing comic strips for the Wizards website and I suggested to my editor Bart Carroll that I could do a *Tomb of Horrors* tie-in comic in the style of those old *Family Circus* comics done as a map diagram, i.e. Billy’s mom tells him to go next door to get a cup of sugar but instead he wanders all over the neighborhood and climbs a fence and goes in a storm drain and so on.

I drew *Tomb of Horrors* in isometric 3D with cartoon characters, telling the story of a party of adventurers and how they explored the tomb and their various—mostly awful—fates. It was popular so I followed it up with walkthrough maps of many other classic and modern adventures. There’s something about the mixture of realistic map backgrounds and stick figures getting killed by monsters that people seem to like. I think it’s very much in the spirit of a certain kind of D&D game, where terrible things can happen to the player characters and it’s not really heroic but it is lots of fun.

The two adventures you wrote for *Dragon+* will both be available soon on the DMs Guild. What can players expect from those? The common theme between *The Barber of Silverymoon* and *Six Faces of Death* is their mixture of humor and horror. Both of them have isometric maps drawn in a style similar to my walkthrough maps.



SELECT TO VIEW

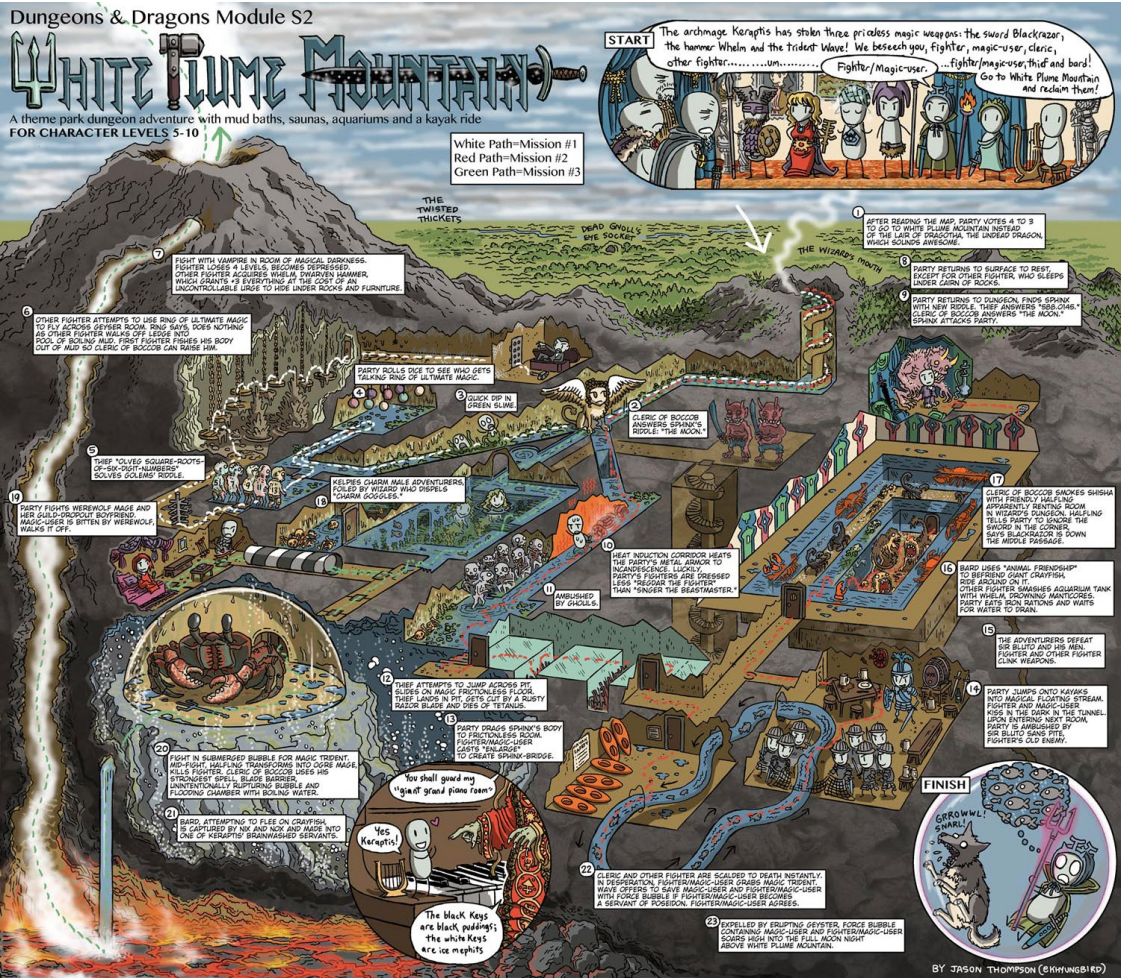
The Barber of Silverymoon (levels 4-6) is a city adventure in which the players investigate a mystery: an epidemic of people turning up with amazing haircuts and no memory of how they got them. It's a funny, spooky, fey-themed one-night adventure where the PCs could end up with permanent magical gifts—or curses.

Six Faces of Death (levels 11-13) is about a mysterious island that has appeared off the Sword Coast, which each passing ship describes in a different way. The adventurers are sent to explore “Changing Island,” where they find an unusual dungeon, tons of devils, and a strange curse that could mutate Faerûn forever if the adventurers don’t stop it! It’s a two- to three-session adventure for experienced players who like scary themes.

What can you tell us about your work outside of D&D?

I’ve worked in a lot of artistic and nerdy fields. For several years I was an editor at comics publisher VIZ, working on the English editions of Japanese manga. I’ve also drawn my own comics, including a graphic novel adaptation of H.P. Lovecraft’s *The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath*, and I did art in both volumes of Josh Trujillo’s RPG comic anthology *Death Saves: Fallen Heroes of the Dinner Table*. I’ve also worked as a story artist for films, most recently on *Minions: The Rise of Gru*.

I tend to like horror-influenced games and I’ve also drawn art and posters for a few other RPGs, such as *Swordfish Islands*, *Lamentations of the Flame Princess*, and *Call of Cthulhu*. Currently I’m working on a “surreal fairytale” RPG called *Dreamland*, which is based on the fantasy stories of H.P. Lovecraft and Lord Dunsany. As far as I know it’s the only game where you can play a blacksmith, a cobbler, or a midwife, and summon a horde of flying cats.



SELECT TO VIEW

Do you have any other D&D projects appearing in the near future? I'm currently working on *Underworld Cup Soccer*, a set of battle mat-based fantasy soccer rules for Dungeons & Dragons. This features art and layout by Konstantin Pogorelov and Jumana Al Hashal, the same team which worked with me on *Priestess: Ancient World Divine Class* and *The Fantasy Shopping Table*. All of those came out of the same campaign, and they're really group efforts. The soccer rules are an alternative combat-like challenge where the aim is to get a ball in the goal, instead of just killing your opponents—though getting killed is also a possibility.

Look for the *Dragon+* adventures *The Barber of Silverymoon* and *Six Faces of Death* which will be available to download for free on the DMs Guild!

MORE INFO

You can find out more about Jason Thompson's work by visiting his [official blog](#) and view his art on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [Facebook](#).

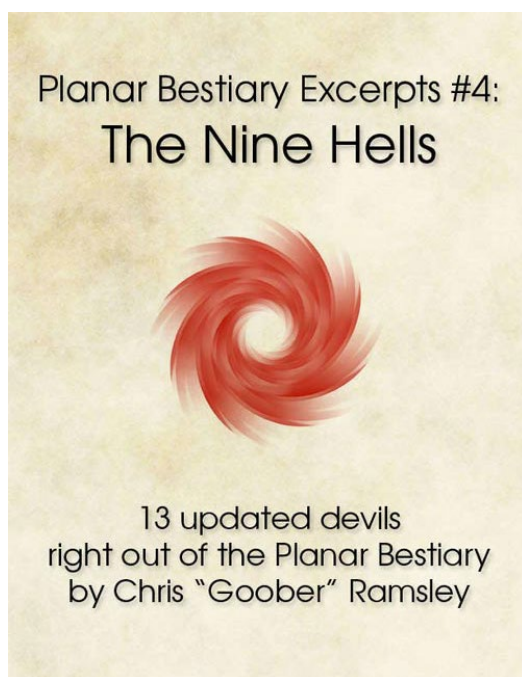
HELL HATH PLENTY OF FURY

If players get to unwrap lots of shiny toys connected with their descent into Hell, it only seems fair that all the hard-working Dungeon Masters get something to play with as well! The following DMs Guild products provide the tools a DM needs to make their campaigns even more memorable.

Planar Bestiary Excerpts #4: The Nine Hells by Chris Ramsley

Price: \$2.00 (PDF)

How many devils are enough when you are running a campaign set in the Nine Hells? Trick question, there are never enough devils! This supplement provides thirteen new and updated devils to



complement those found in the *Monster Manual*. From the lowly legion devil to the terrifying Styx-born Xerfilstyx, these additions will keep your players on their toes.

[MORE INFO](#)



Infernal Reinvention: 5e Devils by Vesper Burjoski

Price: \$1.95 (PDF)

This collection of new devils begins with an astute premise: if devils are supposed to be masters of manipulation, why are so many of them brutal killing machines that lack the ability to plot and scheme? What follows are ten new devils of a wide range of challenge rating, all with the capacity to deceive and corrupt mortals, worthy of that “devil” title. When adventuring on the infernal planes, the possibility of losing one’s soul should be as big a risk as losing

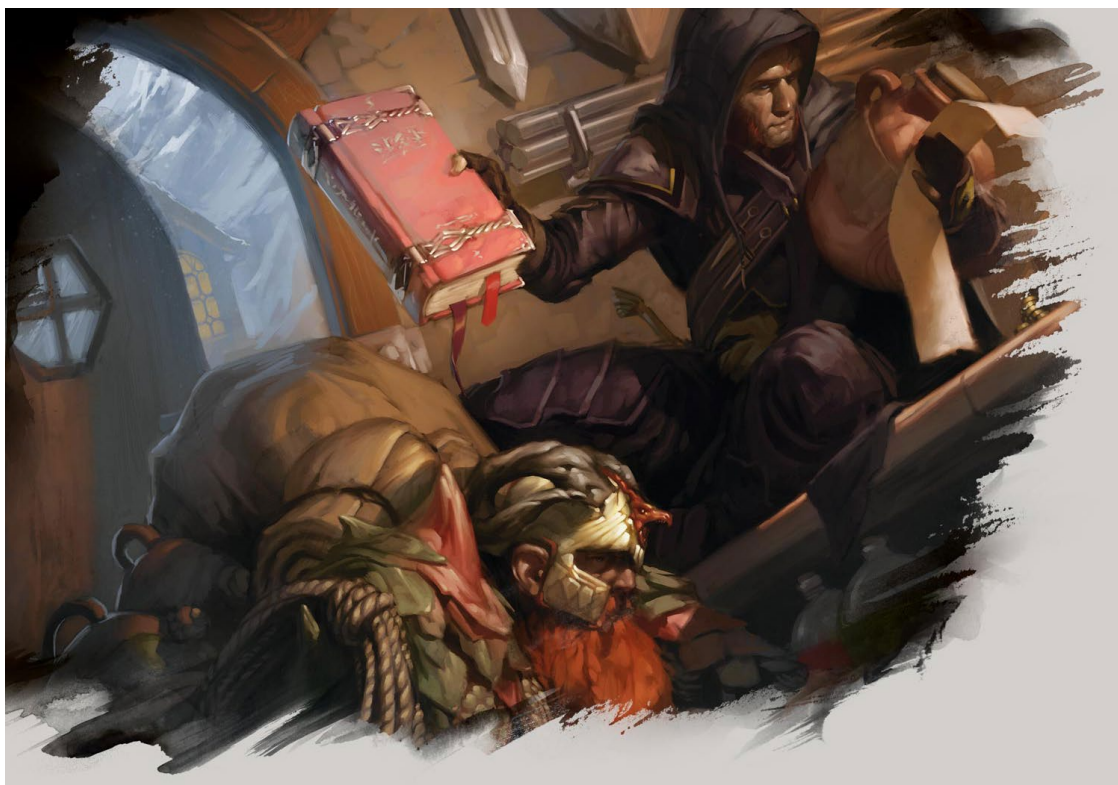
one’s life. This collection threatens both.

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Unearthed Arcana: The Artificer Returns

In a previous Unearthed Arcana we took a second look at the artificer character class, fleshing out this master of magical invention. Now we present an updated revision of this new class, adding further options.



Playtest Material

The material here is presented for playtesting and to spark your imagination. These game mechanics are in draft form, usable in your campaign but not refined by final game development and editing. They aren't officially part of the game and aren't permitted in D&D Adventurers League events.

If we decide to make this material official, it will be refined based on your feedback, and then it will appear in a D&D book.

Masters of unlocking magic in everyday objects, artificers are supreme inventors. They see magic as a complex system waiting to be decoded and controlled. Artificers use tools to channel arcane power, crafting temporary and permanent magical objects. To cast a spell, an artificer could use alchemist's supplies to create a potent elixir, calligrapher's supplies to inscribe a sigil of power on an ally's armor, or tinker's tools to craft a temporary charm. The magic of artificers is tied to their tools and their talents.

Here's what's been added to the artificer class in the latest revision:

New Subclasses

The Archivist and Battle Smith subclasses add to the existing Artillerist and Alchemist options. Archivists are the masters of storing knowledge, operating on the cutting edge of arcane science as they create artificial intelligences fueled by magic. Meanwhile, Battle Smiths act as a combination of protector and medic, using their expertise in repairing both materials and personnel to defend others. Battle Smiths are usually accompanied by an iron defender, a protective companion of their own creation.

Revised Spell List

The artificer spell list has been expanded to include options from *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*. Artificers can now cast cantrips such as *create bonfire*, *frostbite*, and *magic stone*, first level spells such as *absorb elements*, *catapult*, and *snare*, all the way up to fifth level spells such as *skill empowerment* and *transmute rock*.

Other changes to the class include new infusions (*Enhanced Wand*, *Repeating Shot*, and *Repulsion Shield*), as well as changes to multiclassing rules that see players round up when determining spell slots.

You can access the new information on artificers by downloading the PDF.

[Download the PDF now](#)

To see the full treasure trove of Unearthed Arcana articles, covering new classes and feats, conversions of rules from previous editions,

and much more, [visit the archive](#).

Have a request for Unearthed Arcana? Follow [@mikemearls](#) on [Twitter](#) and let him know.

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Unearthed Arcana: Artificer

Playtest Material

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Masters of unlocking magic in everyday objects, artificers are supreme inventors. They see magic as a complex system waiting to be decoded and controlled. Artificers use tools to channel arcane power, crafting temporary and permanent magical objects. To cast a spell, an artificer could use alchemist's supplies to create a potent elixir, calligrapher's supplies to inscribe a sigil of power on an ally's armor, or tinker's tools to craft a temporary charm. The magic of artificers is tied to their tools and their talents.

Arcane Science

In the world of Eberron, arcane magic has been harnessed as a form of science and deployed throughout society. Artificers reflect this development. Their knowledge of magical devices, and their ability to infuse mundane items with magical energy, allows the grand magical projects of Eberron to continue running.

During the Last War, artificers were marshaled on a massive scale. Many lives were saved because of the inventions of brave artificers, but also countless lives were lost because of the mass destruction that artificers' creations unleashed.

Seekers of New Lore

Nothing excites an artificer quite like uncovering a new metal or discovering a source of elemental energy. In artificer circles, new inventions and strange discoveries create the most excitement. Artificers who wish to make a mark must find something fresh, rather than uncover someone else's work.

This drive for novelty pushes artificers to become adventurers. Eberron's main travel routes and populated regions have long since been explored. Thus, artificers take to the edge

of civilization in hopes of making the next great discovery in arcane research.

Creating an Artificer

When creating an artificer character, think about your character's background and drive for adventure. Does the character have a rival? What is the character's relationship with the artisan or artificer who taught the basics of the craft? Talk to your DM about the role played by artificers in the campaign, and what sort of organizations and NPCs you might have ties to.

Quick Build

You can make an artificer quickly by following these suggestions. First, put your highest ability score in Intelligence, followed by Constitution or Dexterity. Second, choose the guild artisan background.

Artificers in Other Worlds

Eberron is the world most associated with artificers, yet the class can be found throughout the multiverse. In the Forgotten Realms, for example, the island of Lantan is home to many artificers, and in the world of Dragonlance, tinker gnomes are often members of this class. The strange technologies in the Barrier Peaks of the World of Greyhawk have inspired some folk to walk the path of the artificer, and in Mystara, various nations employ artificers to keep airships and other wondrous devices operational. In the City of Sigil, artificers share discoveries from throughout the cosmos, and one in particular—the gnome inventor named Vi—runs a multiverse-spanning business from there. In the world-city Ravnica, the Izzet League trains numerous artificers, the destructiveness of whom is unparalleled in other worlds, except by the tinker gnomes of Kryn.

Class Features

As an artificer, you gain the following class features.

Hit Points

Hit Dice: 1d8 per artificer level

Hit Points at 1st Level: 8 + your Constitution modifier

Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d8 (or 5) + your Constitution modifier per artificer level after 1st

Proficiencies

Armor: Light armor, medium armor, shields

Weapons: Simple weapons, hand crossbows, heavy crossbows

Tools: Thieves' tools, tinker's tools, one type of artisan's tools of your choice

Saving Throws: Constitution, Intelligence

Skills: Choose two from Arcana, History, Investigation, Medicine, Nature, Perception, Sleight of Hand

Equipment

You start with the following equipment, in addition to the equipment granted by your background:

- any two simple weapons
- a light crossbow and 20 bolts
- (a) studded leather armor or (b) scale mail
- thieves' tools and a dungeoneer's pack

If you forgo this starting equipment, as well as the items offered by your background, you start with 5d4 × 10 gp to buy your equipment.

Optional Rule: Firearm Proficiency

The creation and operation of gunpowder weapons have been discovered in various corners of the D&D multiverse. If your Dungeon Master uses the rules on firearms in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (p. 267) and your artificer has been exposed to the operation of such weapons, your artificer is proficient with them.

Magical Tinkering

At 1st level, you learn how to invest a spark of magic in objects that would otherwise be mundane. To use this ability, you must have thieves' tools, tinker's tools, or other artisan's tools in hand. You then touch a Tiny nonmagical object as an action and give it one of the following magical properties of your choice:

- The object sheds bright light in a 5-foot radius and dim light for an additional 5 feet.
- Whenever tapped by a creature, the object emits a recorded message that can be heard up to 10 feet away. You utter the message when you bestow this property on the object, and the recording can be no more than 6 seconds long.
- The object continuously emits your choice of an odor or a nonverbal sound (wind, waves,

The Artificer

Level	Proficiency		Infusions Known	Infused Items	Cantrips Known	—Spell Slots per Spell Level—				
	Bonus	Features				1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
1st	+2	Magical Tinkering, Spellcasting	—	—	2	2	—	—	—	—
2nd	+2	Infuse Item	3	2	2	2	—	—	—	—
3rd	+2	Artificer Specialist, Tool Expertise	3	2	2	3	—	—	—	—
4th	+2	Ability Score Improvement	4	2	2	3	—	—	—	—
5th	+3	Arcane Armament	4	2	2	4	2	—	—	—
6th	+3	Artificer Specialist feature	4	3	2	4	2	—	—	—
7th	+3	—	5	3	2	4	3	—	—	—
8th	+3	Ability Score Improvement	5	3	2	4	3	—	—	—
9th	+4	—	5	3	2	4	3	2	—	—
10th	+4	The Right Cantrip for the Job	5	3	3	4	3	2	—	—
11th	+4	—	6	4	3	4	3	3	—	—
12th	+4	Ability Score Improvement	6	4	3	4	3	3	—	—
13th	+5	—	6	4	3	4	3	3	1	—
14th	+5	Artificer Specialist feature	6	4	4	4	3	3	1	—
15th	+5	—	7	4	4	4	3	3	2	—
16th	+5	Ability Score Improvement	7	5	4	4	3	3	2	—
17th	+6	—	7	5	4	4	3	3	3	1
18th	+6	Spell-Storing Item	7	5	4	4	3	3	3	1
19th	+6	Ability Score Improvement	8	5	4	4	3	3	3	2
20th	+6	Soul of Artifice	8	5	4	4	3	3	3	2

chirping, or the like). The chosen phenomenon is perceivable up to 10 feet away.

- A static visual effect appears on one of the object's surfaces. This effect can be a picture, up to 25 words of text, lines and shapes, or a mixture of these elements, as you like.

The chosen property lasts indefinitely. As an action, you can touch the object and end the property early.

You can give the magic of this feature to multiple objects, touching one object each time you use the feature, and a single object can bear only one of the properties at a time. The maximum number of objects you can affect with the feature at one time is equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of one object). If you try to exceed your maximum, the oldest property immediately ends, and then the new property applies.

Spellcasting

You have studied the workings of magic, how to channel it through objects, and how to awaken it within them. As a result, you have gained a limited ability to cast spells. To observers, you don't appear to be casting spells in a conventional way; you look as if you're producing wonders through various items.

Tools Required

You produce your artificer spell effects through your tools. You must have a spellcasting focus—specifically thieves' tools or some kind of artisan's tool—in hand when you cast any spell with this Spellcasting feature. You must be proficient with the tool to use it in this way. See chapter 5, "Equipment," in the *Player's Handbook* for descriptions of these tools.

After you gain the Infuse Item feature at 2nd level, you can also use any item bearing one of your infusions as a spellcasting focus.

Cantrips

At 1st level, you know two cantrips of your choice from the artificer spell list below. At higher levels, you learn additional artificer cantrips of your choice, as shown in the Cantrips Known column of the Artificer table.

When you gain a level in this class, you can replace one of the artificer cantrips you know with another cantrip from the artificer spell list.

Preparing and Casting Spells

The Artificer table shows how many spell slots you have to cast your artificer spells. To cast one of your artificer spells of 1st level or higher, you must expend a slot of the spell's level or higher. You regain all expended spell slots when you finish a long rest.

You prepare the list of artificer spells that are available for you to cast, choosing from the artificer spell list. When you do so, choose a number of artificer spells equal to your Intelligence modifier + half your artificer level, rounded down (minimum of one spell). The spells must be of a level for which you have spell slots.

For example, if you are a 5th-level artificer, you have four 1st-level and two 2nd-level spell slots. With an Intelligence of 14, your list of prepared spells can include four spells of 1st or 2nd level, in any combination. If you prepare the 1st-level spell *cure wounds*, you can cast it using a 1st-level or a 2nd-level slot. Casting the spell doesn't remove it from your list of prepared spells.

You can change your list of prepared spells when you finish a long rest. Preparing a new list of artificer spells requires time spent in tinkering with your spellcasting focuses: at least 1 minute per spell level for each spell on your list.

Spellcasting Ability

Intelligence is your spellcasting ability for your artificer spells; your understanding of the theory behind magic allows you to wield these spells with superior skill. You use your Intelligence whenever an artificer spell refers to your spellcasting ability. In addition, you use your Intelligence modifier when setting the saving throw DC for an artificer spell you cast and when making an attack roll with one.

Spell save DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Intelligence modifier

Spell attack modifier = your proficiency bonus + your Intelligence modifier

Ritual Casting

You can cast an artificer spell as a ritual if that spell has the ritual tag and you have the spell prepared.

Artificer Spell List

Here's the list of spells you consult when you learn an artificer spell. The list is organized by spell level, not character level. If a spell can be cast as a ritual, the ritual tag appears after the spell's name.

These spells are from the *Player's Handbook*. If a spell's name is followed by an asterisk, the spell is instead from *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*.

Cantrips (0 Level)

acid splash
*create bonfire**
dancing lights
fire bolt
*frostbite**
guidance
light
mage hand
*magic stone**
mending
message
poison spray
prestidigitation
ray of frost
resistance
shocking grasp
spare the dying
thorn whip
*thunderclap**

1st Level

*absorb elements**
alarm (ritual)
arcane weapon (see the end of the document)
*catapult**
cure wounds
detect magic (ritual)
disguise self
expeditious retreat
faerie fire
false life
feather fall
grease
identify (ritual)
jump
longstrider
sanctuary
*snare**

2nd Level

aid
alter self
arcane lock

blur
continual flame
darkvision
enhance ability
enlarge/reduce
heat metal
invisibility
lesser restoration
levitate
magic mouth (ritual)
magic weapon
protection from poison
*pyrotechnics**
rope trick
see invisibility
*skywrite** (ritual)
spider climb

3rd Level

blink
*catnap**
dispel magic
elemental weapon
*flame arrows**
fly
gaseous form
glyph of warding
haste
protection from energy
revivify
*tiny servant**
water breathing (ritual)
water walk (ritual)

4th Level

arcane eye
*elemental bane**
fabricate
freedom of movement
Leomund's secret chest
Mordenkainen's faithful hound
Mordenkainen's private sanctum
Otiluke's resilient sphere
stone shape
stoneskin
*vitriolic sphere**

5th Level

animate objects
Bigby's hand
creation
greater restoration
*skill empowerment**
*transmute rock**
wall of stone

The Magic of Artifice

As an artificer, you use tools when you cast your spells. When describing your spellcasting, think about how you're using a tool to perform the spell effect. If you cast *cure wounds* using alchemist's supplies, you could be quickly producing a salve. If you cast it using tinker's tools, you might have a miniature mechanical spider that binds wounds. When you cast *poison spray*, you could fling foul chemicals or use a wand that spits venom. The effect of the spell is the same as for a spellcaster of any other class, but your method of spellcasting is special.

The same principle applies when you prepare your spells. As an artificer, you don't study a spellbook or pray to prepare your spells. Instead, you work with your tools and create the specialized items you'll use to produce your effects. If you replace *cure wounds* with *shocking grasp*, you might be breaking down the device you used to heal and creating an offensive item in its place—perhaps a gauntlet that lets you channel a surge of energy.

Such details don't limit you in any way or provide you with any benefit. You don't have to justify how you're using tools to cast a spell. But describing your spellcasting creatively is a fun way to distinguish yourself from other spellcasters.

Infuse Item

At 2nd level, you gain the ability to imbue mundane items with certain magical infusions. The magic items you create with this feature are effectively prototypes of permanent items.

Infusions Known

When you gain this feature, pick three artificer infusions to learn, choosing from the "Artificer Infusions" section at the end of the class's description. You learn additional infusions of your choice when you reach certain levels in this class, as shown in the Infusions Known column of the Artificer table.

Whenever you gain a level in this class, you can replace one of the artificer infusions you learned with a new one.

Infusing an Item

Whenever you finish a long rest, you can touch a nonmagical object and imbue it with one of your artificer infusions, turning it into a magic item. An infusion works on only certain kinds of objects, as specified in the infusion's description. If the item requires attunement, you can attune yourself to it the instant you infuse the item, or you can forgo attunement so that someone else

can attune to the item. If you decide to attune to the item later, you must do so using the normal process for attunement (see "Attunement" in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 136).

Your infusion remains in an item indefinitely, but when you die, the infusion vanishes after a number of days have passed equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of 1 day). The infusion also vanishes if you give up your knowledge of the infusion for another one.

You can infuse more than one nonmagical object at the end of a long rest; the maximum number of objects appears in the Infused Items column of the Artificer table. You must touch each of the objects, and each of your infusions can be in only one object at a time. If you try to exceed your maximum number of infusions, the oldest infusion immediately ends, and then the new infusion applies.

Artificer Specialist

At 3rd level, you choose the type of specialist you are: Alchemist, Archivist, Artillerist, or Battle Smith, each of which is detailed at the end of the class's description. Your choice grants you features at 3rd level and again at 6th and 14th level.

Variant: Crafting

An artificer subclass makes you more efficient at crafting certain items. The feature you get from your subclass works whether you're using the crafting rules in the *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, or *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*.

Tool Expertise

Starting at 3rd level, your proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check you make that uses your proficiency with a tool.

Ability Score Improvement

When you reach 4th, 8th, 12th, 16th, and 19th level, you can increase one ability score of your choice by 2, or you can increase two ability scores of your choice by 1. As normal, you can't increase an ability score above 20 using this feature.

Arcane Armament

Starting at 5th level, you can attack twice, rather than once, whenever you take the Attack action on your turn, but one of the attacks must be made with a magic weapon, the magic of which you use to propel the attack.

The Right Cantrip for the Job

At 10th level, you gain the ability to make sure you have the right magical tool for a job. Whenever you finish a short or long rest, you can replace one of the artificer cantrips you know with another cantrip from the artificer spell list.

Spell-Storing Item

When you reach 18th level, you learn how to store a spell in an object for repeated use. Whenever you finish a long rest, you can touch one simple or martial weapon or an item that you can use as a spellcasting focus and store a spell in it, choosing one 1st- or 2nd-level spell from the artificer spell list that requires 1 action to cast (you don't need to have the spell prepared). With the object in hand, a creature can take an action to produce the spell's effect from it, using your spellcasting ability modifier.

The spell stays in the object until it has been used a number of times equal to twice your Intelligence modifier (minimum of twice) or until you use this feature again.

Soul of Artifice

At 20th level, your understanding of magic items is unmatched, allowing you to mingle your soul with items linked to you. You can attune to up to six magic items at once. In addition, you gain a +1 bonus to all saving throws per magic item you are currently attuned to.

Artificer Specialists

Artificers pursue many disciplines. Here are specialist options you can choose from at 3rd level.

Alchemist

An Alchemist is an expert at combining exotic reagents to produce mystical effects. Among

artificers, members of this subclass are the greatest healers, as well as the ones most adept at wielding dangerous chemicals.

Tools of the Trade

By the time you adopt this specialty at 3rd level, you're deeply familiar with employing its tools.

Proficiencies. You gain proficiency with alchemist's supplies and the herbalism kit, assuming you don't already have them. You also gain alchemist's supplies and an herbalism kit for free—the result of tinkering you've done as you've prepared for this specialization.

Crafting. If you craft a magic item in the potion category, it takes you a quarter of the normal time, and it costs you half as much of the usual gold.

Alchemist Spells

Starting at 3rd level, you always have certain spells prepared after you reach particular levels in this class, as shown in the Alchemist Spells table. These spells count as artificer spells for you, but they don't count against the number of artificer spells you prepare.

Alchemist Spells

Artificer Level	Spell
3rd	<i>purify food and drink, ray of sickness</i>
5th	<i>Melf's acid arrow, web</i>
9th	<i>create food and water, stinking cloud</i>
13th	<i>blight, death ward</i>
17th	<i>cloudkill, raise dead</i>

Alchemical Homunculus

At 3rd level, you learn ancient methods for magically creating a special homunculus that is formed by alchemical substances.

Whenever you finish a long rest and your alchemist's supplies are with you, you can form this homunculus in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of you. If you already have a homunculus from this feature, the first one immediately dies.

The homunculus is friendly to you and your companions, and it obeys your commands. See this creature's game statistics in the Alchemical Homunculus stat block. You determine the homunculus's appearance, which includes wings and bits of alchemical equipment. Some alchemists prefer mechanical-looking birds, whereas others like winged vials or miniature cauldrons.

In combat, the homunculus shares your initiative count, but it takes its turn immediately after yours. The only action it takes on its turn is the Dodge action, unless you take a bonus action on your turn to command it to take one of the actions in its stat block or to take the Dash, Disengage, or Help action.

If the *mending* spell is cast on it, it regains 2d6 hit points. If it has died within the last hour, you can use your alchemist's supplies as an action to revive it, provided you are within 5 feet of it and you expend a spell slot of 1st level or higher. The homunculus returns to life with all its hit points restored.

Alchemical Homunculus

Tiny construct, neutral

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points equal to five times your level in this class + your Intelligence modifier

Speed 20 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
4 (−3)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	7 (−2)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +4

Damage Immunities acid, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands the languages you speak

Might of the Master. The following numbers increase by 1 when your proficiency bonus increases by 1: the homunculus's skill bonuses and the bonuses to hit and damage of its Acidic Spittle.

Actions (Require Your Bonus Action)

Acidic Spittle. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30 ft., one target you can see. *Hit:* 1d6 + 2 acid damage.

Alchemical Salve (3/Day). The homunculus produces a salve and touches one creature you designate. The target receives one of the following magical benefits of your choice:

Buoyancy. The target gains a flying speed of 10 feet for 10 minutes.

Inspiration. The target feels giddy and effective, gaining advantage on certain ability checks in the next hour. The target chooses the checks before or after rolling. The magic runs out after the target has used it on a number of checks equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of 1).

Resilience. The target gains a number of temporary hit points equal to 2d6 + your Intelligence modifier.

Alchemical Mastery

At 6th level, your command of magical chemicals has become masterful, enhancing the healing and damage you create through them. When you cast a spell using your alchemist's supplies as the spellcasting focus, you gain a bonus to one roll of the spell. That roll must restore hit points or be a damage roll that deals acid or poison damage, and the bonus equals your Intelligence modifier (minimum of +1).

In addition, you can cast *lesser restoration* without expending a spell slot, provided you use alchemist's supplies as the spellcasting focus. You can do so a number of times per day equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of once).

Chemical Savant

By 14th level, you have been exposed to so many chemicals and unlocked their secrets that they pose little risk to you, and you can use them to quickly end certain ailments. You gain resistance to acid damage and poison damage, and you are now immune to the poisoned condition.

In addition, you can cast *greater restoration* once without expending a spell slot and without providing the material component, provided you use alchemist's supplies as the spellcasting focus. You regain the ability to do so when you finish a long rest.

Archivist

What are the best ways to store vast amounts of information? That question has occupied chroniclers and librarians for centuries. Scrolls and books were the finest information-storing methods for a long time, but the first Archivists imagined something greater: storing information in a real or an artificial mind. What library could match a mental archive capable of accessing information in seconds? As they work towards this goal, Archivists have become masters of storing knowledge and creating artificial intelligences fueled by magic. These techniques have yet to be perfected and institutionalized, and of all artificers, archivists are on the cutting edge of arcane science.

Tools of the Trade

By the time you adopt this specialty at 3rd level, you're deeply familiar with employing its tools.

Proficiencies. You gain proficiency with calligrapher's supplies and the forgery kit, assuming you don't already have them. You also gain calligrapher's supplies and a forgery kit for free—the result of tinkering you've done as you've prepared for this specialization.

Crafting. If you craft a magic item in the scroll category, it takes you a quarter of the normal time, and it costs you half as much of the usual gold.

Archivist Spells

Starting at 3rd level, you always have certain spells prepared after you reach particular levels in this class, as shown in the Archivist Spells table. These spells count as artificer spells for you, but they don't count against the number of artificer spells you prepare.

Archivist Spells

Artificer Level	Spell
3rd	<i>comprehend languages, dissonant whispers</i>
5th	<i>detect thoughts, locate object</i>
9th	<i>hypnotic pattern, tongues</i>
13th	<i>locate creature, phantasmal killer</i>
17th	<i>legend lore, modify memory</i>

Artificial Mind

At 3rd level, you discover how to awaken a mind inside an object. Whenever you finish a long rest and your calligrapher's supplies are with you, you can magically rouse a keen mind within a Tiny, nonmagical object on which you write mystical symbols. The object is a magic item while the mind is inside it, and you can use it as a spellcasting focus. If you already have an artificial mind from this feature, the first one immediately dissipates.

The magic item has the following properties.

Telepathic Advisor. The artificial mind telepathically supplies you with advice and information about certain topics: while the item is on your person, you have proficiency in two skills of your choice; the item's main material

determines which skills you can choose from, as shown on the Artificial Mind table in the Skill Proficiencies column, for the nature of the object affects the mind's knowledge.

Manifest Mind. As a bonus action while the item is on your person, you can cause the mind to manifest as a Tiny spectral presence, hovering in an unoccupied space of your choice within 60 feet of you. This presence is intangible and invulnerable, and it sheds dim light in a 10-foot radius. You determine its appearance; the Artificial Mind table offers suggested appearances based on the object's main material.

While manifested, the spectral mind can hear and see, and it has darkvision with a range of 60 feet. As an action, you can hear and see using the mind's senses, instead of your own, until your concentration ends (as if concentrating on a spell).

As a bonus action, you can cause the spectral mind to hover up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space that you or it can see. It can pass through creatures but not objects. The spectral mind stops manifesting if it is ever more than 300 feet away from its magic item or if you dismiss it as a bonus action.

When you cast an artificer spell on your turn, you can cast it as if you were in the spectral mind's space, instead of your own, using its senses. You can do so a number of times per day equal to your Intelligence modifier (at least once), and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

Information Overload. As an action while the item is on your person, you can try to magically overload the thoughts of one creature you or the mind can see that is within 5 feet of the manifested mind, channeling a jumble of information from the artificial mind. Unless the target succeeds on an Intelligence saving throw against your spell save DC, the target takes 1d8 psychic damage, and the next attack roll against it before the end of your next turn has advantage, since it is temporarily too distracted to defend itself well. The damage increases by

Artificial Mind

Main Material	Skill Proficiencies	Suggested Appearance
Animal {parchment, leather, bone}	Animal Handling, Insight, Medicine, Perception, Survival	A beast or a humanoid visage with antlers
Mineral {glass, stone, metal}	Deception, Intimidation, Performance, Persuasion	A robotic or golem-like face
Plant {paper, wood}	Arcana, History, Investigation, Nature, Religion	A bespectacled visage or a treant

1d8 when you reach 5th level (2d8), 11th level (3d8), and 17th level (4d8) in this class.

Whenever you deal damage with this feature, you can expend a spell slot to deal extra damage to the target. The extra damage is 2d8 for a 1st-level spell slot, plus 1d8 for each spell level higher than first.

Mind Network

At 6th level, you've learned how to use your artifices to access minds, both to communicate and to harm.

Magical Telephony. While you have your Artificial Mind item on your person, you can communicate telepathically with anyone carrying an item bearing one of your artificer infusions, as the mind transmits your thoughts to each other. That person can also communicate telepathically with you as long as they have the item. This two-way communication can even cross planar boundaries.

Psychic Damage. When you make a psychic damage roll for an artificer spell or for Information Overload, you gain a bonus to the damage roll equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum bonus of +1).

Pure Information

At 14th level, your Artificial Mind is able to receive and transmit more information than ever before.

Mind Overload. When you expend a spell slot to increase the damage of Information Overload, the target must succeed on an Intelligence saving throw against your spell save DC or be stunned until the end of your next turn.

Infoportation. As an action while your Artificial Mind magic item is on your person, you cause the mind to turn you into pure information, teleporting you to the unoccupied space nearest to the spectral mind or to an item bearing one of your artificer infusions, where you physically reappear.

You can teleport in this way once for free and must finish a long rest before doing so again. You can also use this special ability by expending a spell slot of 2nd level or higher.

The First Warforged Minds

Warforged were originally created by House Cannith to fight as subservient beings, having limited self-awareness. The development of the autonomous warforged consciousness has been presented as an

accidental breakthrough. However, rumors abound that it was the work of pioneering archivist Aaren d'Cannith, who planted the seed of autonomy in the warforged mind. This fact is now difficult to verify, for the development team's records were destroyed and Aaren d'Cannith disappeared under mysterious circumstances. Many believe that Aaren is still determined to help the warforged evolve and that he might be working with the sinister Lord of Blades.

Artillerist

An Artillerist specializes in using magic to create explosions and defensive positions, as well as magic-infused sidearms—especially wands—that can be used on the battlefield. Artillerists were valued by all the armies of the Last War.

Tools of the Trade

By the time you adopt this specialty at 3rd level, you're deeply familiar with employing its tools.

Proficiencies. You gain proficiency with smith's tools and woodcarver's tools, assuming you don't already have them. You also gain those tools for free—the result of tinkering you've done as you've prepared for this specialization.

In addition, you gain the ability to use rods, staves, and wands as spellcasting focuses for your artificer spells. You also gain a nonmagical, wooden wand for free, which you've carved in your spare time.

Crafting. If you craft a magic item in the wand category, it takes you a quarter of the normal time, and it costs you half as much of the usual gold.

Artillerist Spells

Starting at 3rd level, you always have certain spells prepared after you reach particular levels in this class, as shown in the Artillerist Spells table. These spells count as artificer spells for you, but they don't count against the number of artificer spells you prepare.

Artillerist Spells

Artificer Level	Spell
3rd	<i>shield, thunderwave</i>
5th	<i>scorching ray, shatter</i>
9th	<i>fireball, wind wall</i>
13th	<i>ice storm, wall of fire</i>
17th	<i>cone of cold, wall of force</i>

Arcane Turret

At 3rd level, you learn how to create a magical turret. With your smith's tools in hand, you can take an action to magically summon a Medium turret in an unoccupied space on a horizontal surface within 5 feet of you.

The turret is a magical object that occupies its space and that has crablike legs. It has an AC of 18 and a number of hit points equal to five times your artificer level. It is immune to poison damage, psychic damage, and all conditions. If it is forced to make an ability check or a saving throw, treat all its ability scores as 10 (+0). If the *mending* spell is cast on it, it regains 2d6 hit points. It disappears if it is reduced to 0 hit points or after 10 minutes. You can dismiss it early as an action.

When you summon the turret, you decide which type it is, choosing from the options on the Arcane Turrets table. On each of your turns, you can take a bonus action to cause the turret to activate if you are within 60 feet of it. As part of the same action, you can direct the turret to walk or climb up to 15 feet to an unoccupied space.

You can summon a turret once for free and must finish a long rest before doing so again. You can also summon the turret by expending a spell slot of 1st level or higher. If you summon a second turret, the first turret disappears.

As an action, you can command your turret to detonate if you are within 60 feet of it. Doing so destroys the turret and forces each creature within 10 feet of it to make a Dexterity saving throw against your spell save DC, taking 3d6 force damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one.

Arcane Turrets

Turret	Activation
Flamethrower	The turret exhales fire in an adjacent 15-foot cone that you designate. Each creature in that area must make a Dexterity saving throw against your spell save DC, taking 1d8 fire damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one. The fire ignites any flammable objects in the area that aren't being worn or carried.

Force Ballista Make a ranged spell attack, originating from the turret, at one creature or object within 120 feet of it. On a hit, the target takes 2d8 force damage, and if the target is a creature, it is pushed up to 5 feet away from the turret.

Defender The turret emits a burst of positive energy that grants itself and each creature of your choice within 10 feet of it a number of temporary hit points equal to 1d8 + your Intelligence modifier (minimum of +1).

Wand Prototype

By 6th level, you now regularly experiment with channeling different types of magic through wands. Whenever you finish a long rest and your woodcarver's tools are with you, you can touch a nonmagical, wooden wand and turn it into a magic item. When you do so, you invest it with one artificer cantrip of your choice—even one you don't know—that has a casting time of 1 action. As an action, you can cause the magic wand to produce the cantrip, using your spellcasting ability modifier (other creatures are unable to use the wand's magic). The wand loses this magic when you finish your next long rest.

Any damage roll you make for a cantrip in the wand gains a bonus equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of +1).

When you reach 14th level in this class, you can invest the wand with two cantrips at the end of a long rest.

Fortified Position

Starting at 14th level, you're a master at conjuring a well-defended emplacement. You and your allies have half cover while within 10 feet of a turret you create with Arcane Turret, as a result of a shimmering field of magical protection that the turret emits.

You can also now summon a second turret for free and must finish a long rest before doing so again. If you summon the second turret while the first is still present, the first one doesn't disappear, and each turret can be of a different type (if you summon a third turret, the first turret vanishes). Moreover, you can use one bonus action to activate both turrets.

Battle Smith

Armies require protection, and someone has to put things back together if defenses fail. A combination of protector and medic, a Battle Smith is an expert at defending others and repairing both materiel and personnel. To aid in their work, Battle Smiths are usually accompanied by an iron defender, a protective companion of their own creation. Many soldiers tell stories of nearly dying before being saved by a Battle Smith and an iron defender.

Battle Smiths played a key role in House Cannith's work on battle constructs and the original warforged, and after the Last War, these artificers led efforts to aid those who were injured in the war's horrific battles.

Tools of the Trade

By the time you adopt this specialty at 3rd level, you're deeply familiar with employing its tools.

Proficiencies. You gain proficiency with leatherworker's tools and smith's tools, assuming you don't already have them. You also gain leatherworker's tools and smith's tools for free—the result of tinkering you've done as you've prepared for this specialization.

Crafting. If you craft a magic item in the armor category, it takes you a quarter of the normal time, and it costs you half as much of the usual gold.

Battle Smith Spells

Starting at 3rd level, you always have certain spells prepared after you reach particular levels in this class, as shown in the Battle Smith Spells table. These spells count as artificer spells for you, but they don't count against the number of artificer spells you prepare.

Battle Smith Spells

Artificer Level	Spell
3rd	<i>heroism, searing smite</i>
5th	<i>branding smite, warding bond</i>
9th	<i>aura of vitality, blinding smite</i>
13th	<i>aura of purity, staggering smite</i>
17th	<i>banishing smite, mass cure wounds</i>

Battle Ready

When you reach 3rd level, your combat training and your experiments with magic and have paid off in two ways:

- You gain proficiency with martial weapons.
- When you attack with a magic weapon, you can use your Intelligence modifier, instead of Strength or Dexterity, for the attack and damage rolls.

Iron Defender

By 3rd level, the tinkering in your free time has borne you a faithful companion, an iron defender. This metallic creature resembles a hound, a cougar, a bear, or another four-legged creature of your choice. It is friendly to you and your companions, and it obeys your commands. See this creature's game statistics in the iron defender stat block.

In combat, the iron defender shares your initiative count, but it takes its turn immediately after yours. It can move and use its reaction on its own, but the only action it takes on its turn is the Dodge action, unless you take a bonus action on your turn to command it to take one of the actions in its stat block or the Dash, Disengage, or Help action.

If the *mending* spell is cast on it, it regains 2d6 hit points. If it has died within the last hour, you can use your smith's tools as an action to revive it, provided you are within 5 feet of it and you expend a spell slot of 1st level or higher. The iron defender returns to life after 1 minute with all its hit points restored.

At the end of a long rest, you can create a new iron defender if you have your smith's tools with you. If you already have an iron defender from this feature, the first one immediately perishes.

Iron Defender

Medium construct, neutral

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points equal to five times your level in this class + your Intelligence modifier + the iron defender's Constitution modifier

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	4 (–4)	10 (+0)	6 (–2)

Skills Perception +4

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands the languages you speak

Might of the Master. The following numbers increase by 1 when your proficiency bonus increases by 1: the iron defender's skill bonuses, the bonuses to hit and damage of its bite, and the number of hit points restored by its Repair action.

Vigilant. The iron defender can't be surprised.

Actions (Requires Your Bonus Action)

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target you can see. *Hit:* 1d8 + 2 piercing damage.

Repair (3/Day). The magical mechanisms inside the iron defender restore 2d8 + 2 hit points to itself or to one construct or object within 5 feet of it.

Reaction

Defensive Pounce. The iron defender imposes disadvantage on the attack roll of one creature it can see that is within 5 feet of it, provided the attack roll is against a creature other than the iron defender.

Arcane Jolt

At 6th level, you learn new ways to channel arcane energy through your weapon attacks and your iron defender.

First, your iron defender's bite attack is now considered magical for the purposes of bypassing resistances and immunities, thanks to enhancements you've made to the creature in your free time.

Second, when you or your iron defender hits a target with a magic weapon attack, you can channel magical energy through the strike to create one of the following effects:

- The target takes an extra 2d4 force damage.
- Choose one creature or object you can see within 30 feet of the target. Healing energy flows into the chosen recipient, restoring 2d4 hit points to it.

You can channel this magical energy a number of times equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of once), but you can do so no more than once on a turn. You regain all expended uses of this feature when you finish a long rest.

Improved Defender

At 14th level, your Arcane Jolt and iron defender become more powerful:

- The extra damage and the healing of your Arcane Jolt both increase to 4d4.
- Whenever your iron defender uses its Defensive Pounce, the attacker takes force

damage equal to 1d4 + your Intelligence modifier.

Artificer Infusions

Artificers have invented numerous magical infusions that rapidly create magic items. To the untrained, artificers seem like wonderworkers, accomplishing in hours what others need weeks to complete.

The description of each infusion tells you the type of item that can receive it. The description also tells you if the resulting magic item requires attunement.

Some infusions specify a minimum artificer level. You can't learn such an infusion until you are at least that level.

Unless an infusion's description says otherwise, you can't learn the infusion more than once.

Boots of the Winding Path

Prerequisite: 4th-level artificer

Item: A pair of boots (requires attunement)

While wearing these boots, a creature can teleport up to 15 feet as a bonus action to an unoccupied space the creature can see. The creature must have occupied that space at some point during the current turn.

Enhanced Defense

Item: A suit of armor or a shield

A creature gains a +1 bonus to Armor Class while wearing (armor) or wielding (shield) the infused item.

The bonus increases to +2 when you reach 12th level in this class.

Enhanced Wand

Item: A wand (requires attunement)

While holding this wand, a creature gains a +1 bonus to spell attack rolls. In addition, the creature ignores half cover when making a spell attack.

The bonus increases to +2 when you reach 12th level in this class.

Enhanced Weapon

Item: A simple or martial weapon

This magic weapon grants a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it.

The bonus increases to +2 when you reach 12th level in this class.

Many-Handed Pouch

Prerequisite: 4th-level artificer

Item: 2–5 pouches

The infused pouches all share one interdimensional space of the same capacity as a single pouch. Thus, reaching into any of the pouches allows access to the same storage space. A pouch operates as long as it is within 100 miles of another one of the pouches; the pouch is otherwise empty and won't accept any contents.

If this infusion ends, the items stored in the shared space move into one of the pouches, determined at random. The rest of the pouches become empty.

Radiant Weapon

Prerequisite: 8th-level artificer

Item: A simple or martial weapon (requires attunement)

This magic weapon grants a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it. While holding it, the wielder can take a bonus action to cause it to shed bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light for an additional 30 feet. The wielder can extinguish the light as a bonus action.

As a reaction immediately after being hit by a melee attack, the wielder can cause the attacker to be blinded until the end of the attacker's next turn, unless the attacker succeeds on a Constitution saving throw against your spell save DC. Once used, this reaction can't be used again until the wielder finishes a short or long rest.

Repeating Shot

Item: A simple or martial weapon with the ammunition property (requires attunement)

This magic weapon grants a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it when it's used to make a ranged attack, and it ignores the loading property if it has it.

The weapon requires no ammunition; it magically produces one piece of ammunition each time you make a ranged attack with it, unless you manually load it. The ammunition produced by the weapon vanishes the instant after the it hits or misses a target.

Replicate Magic Item

Prerequisite: See below

Using this infusion, you replicate a particular magic item. You can learn this infusion multiple times; each time you do so, choose a different magic item that you can make with it, picking from the Replicable Magic Items tables below. If a table has a level in its title, you must be of at least that level in this class to choose an item from the table.

In the tables, an item's entry tells you whether the item requires attunement. See the item's description in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for more information about it, including the type of object required for its making.

Replicable Magic Items

Magic Item	Attunement
Alchemy jug	No
Bag of holding	No
Cap of water breathing	No
Cloak of the manta ray	No
Goggles of night	No
Lantern of revealing	No
Rope of climbing	No
Sending stones	No
Wand of magic detection	No
Wand of secrets	No

Replicable Magic Items (12th-Level Artificer)

Magic Item	Attunement
Boots of elvenkind	No
Boots of striding and springing	Yes
Boots of the winterlands	Yes
Bracers of archery	Yes
Brooch of shielding	Yes
Cloak of elvenkind	Yes
Cloak of protection	Yes
Eyes of charming	Yes
Eyes of the eagle	Yes
Gauntlets of ogre power	Yes
Gloves of missile snaring	Yes
Gloves of swimming and climbing	Yes
Gloves of thievery	No
Hat of disguise	Yes
Headband of intellect	Yes
Helm of telepathy	Yes
Medallion of thoughts	Yes
Periapt of wound closure	Yes
Pipes of haunting	No
Pipes of the sewers	Yes
Quiver of Ehlonna	No
Ring of jumping	Yes
Ring of mind shielding	Yes
Ring of water walking	No

<i>Slippers of spider climbing</i>	Yes
<i>Winged boots</i>	Yes

Replicable Magic Items (16th-Level Artificer)

Item	Attunement
<i>Amulet of health</i>	Yes
<i>Belt of hill giant strength</i>	Yes
<i>Boots of levitation</i>	Yes
<i>Boots of speed</i>	Yes
<i>Bracers of defense</i>	Yes
<i>Cloak of the bat</i>	Yes
<i>Dimensional shackles</i>	No
<i>Gem of seeing</i>	Yes
<i>Horn of blasting</i>	No
<i>Ring of free action</i>	Yes
<i>Ring of protection</i>	Yes
<i>Ring of the ram</i>	Yes

Repulsion Shield

Prerequisite: 8th-level artificer

Item: A shield (requires attunement)

A creature gains a +1 bonus to Armor Class while wielding this shield. While holding it, the wielder can use a reaction immediately after being hit by a melee attack to push the attacker up to 15 feet away. Once used, this reaction can't be used again until the wielder finishes a short or long rest.

Resistant Armor

Prerequisite: 8th-level artificer

Item: A suit of armor (requires attunement)

While wearing this armor, a creature has resistance to one of the following damage types, which you choose when you infuse the item: acid, cold, fire, force, lightning, necrotic, poison, psychic, radiant, or thunder.

Returning Weapon

Item: A simple or martial weapon with the thrown property

This magic weapon grants a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it, and it returns to the wielder's hand immediately after it is used to make a ranged attack.

New Spell

The artificer spell list contains a new spell: *arcane weapon*.

Arcane Weapon

1st-level transmutation

Casting Time: 1 bonus action

Range: Self

Components: V, S

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 hour

You channel arcane energy into one simple or martial weapon you're holding, and choose one damage type: acid, cold, fire, lightning, poison, or thunder. Until the spell ends, you deal an extra 1d6 damage of the chosen type to any target you hit with the weapon. If the weapon isn't magical, it becomes a magic weapon for the spell's duration.

As a bonus action, you can change the damage type, choosing from the options above.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher, you can maintain your concentration on the spell for up to 8 hours.

Optional Rule: Multiclassing

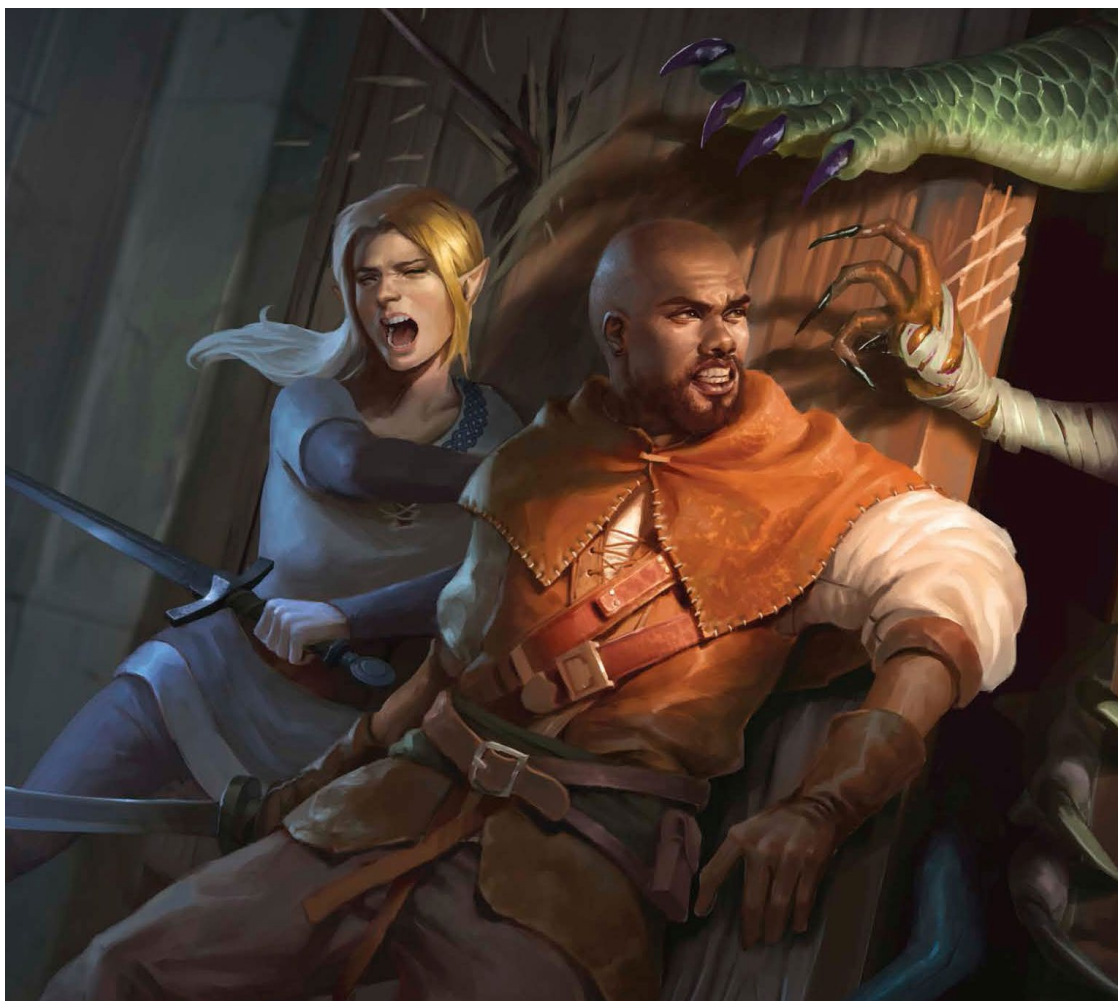
If your group uses the optional rule on multiclassing in the *Player's Handbook* (p. 163), here's what you need to know if you choose artificer as one of your classes.

Ability Score Minimum. As a multiclass character, you must have at least an Intelligence score of 13 to take a level in this class.

Proficiencies Gained. If artificer isn't your initial class, here are the proficiencies you gain when you take your first level as an artificer: light armor, medium armor, shields, thieves' tools, tinker's tools.

Extra Attack. The Arcane Armament feature doesn't give you an additional attack if you also have the Extra Attack feature.

Spell Slots. Add half your levels (rounded up) in the artificer class to the appropriate levels from other classes to determine your available spell slots.



The Experience of Youth

Jim Zub offers a sneak peek inside the D&D Young Adventurer's Guides, before Chris Perkins lifts the lid on the D&D Essentials Kit

Matt Chapman

There's something magical about seeing the enjoyment on the faces of children during a game of Dungeons & Dragons. Whether it's your own youngsters sitting around the kitchen table or the kids of Hawkins, Indiana hanging out in Mikey's basement in *Stranger Things*, watching them flex their imaginations as they discover new worlds can be life affirming.

And there's never been a better time to introduce younger players to D&D. The *Stranger Things D&D Roleplaying Game Starter Set*, which we featured in Issue 24, is designed to help new players navigate the world of Faerûn. That will soon be joined by both a new series of illustrated primers and the *D&D Essentials Kit* (more from Chris Perkins on that second release below).

Those primers are better known as the *D&D Young Adventurer's Guides* and the first two volumes (*Warriors & Weapons*, and *Monsters & Creatures*) debut in July, with *Dungeons & Tombs* following later this fall and *Wizards & Spells* released early in 2020. If you know any young readers who might enjoy flipping through pages of magical worlds, memorable monsters, and the weapons and armor of heroes, this is the series to introduce them to D&D!



Minsc and Boo

“The *D&D Young Adventurer's Guides* are meant to introduce people—particularly ages eight to twelve—to the concept of roleplaying and character creation in the worlds that make up a Dungeons & Dragons game. They're not meant to replace the *D&D Starter Set* or the *Players Handbook*. They're more about giving people the ingredients for storytelling and hopefully inspiring them to want to build their own stories,” says writer Jim Zub, co-creator of the *Rick & Morty vs. Dungeons & Dragons* comic series and lead author on the *D&D Young Adventurer's Guides*.

The emphasis of the books is on the roleplaying aspect of Dungeons & Dragons, rather than the nuts and bolts of the RPG system, with potential players able to focus on the kind of character they imagine themselves to be. The guides help them to visualize that in terms of personality, class, and even

equipment as they begin to understand their role in an adventuring party.

“The readers we’re trying to tap into are the people whose eyes will swim over when they see a whole load of charts or find themselves worrying about what the statistics mean. We want them to think about stories, drama, and their excitement for what’s to come. After that we can show them that they need to roll 3d6 and add up their ability scores and saving throws so they can see what all those things represent.

“It’s the abstraction of what those numbers mean. I think it’s really important for them to say, ‘This is the character I want to be. I want to be heroic or curious or devious.’ That all comes before you attach any stats to it. Remember when you were a kid and you’d just make up stories and generate heroic things in your mind? We’re doing that within the framework of a specific set of options, to show people how it can work and get them thinking in a creative way.”

When Zub talks about remembering a heroic childhood, he’s very much talking about his own formative years. His older brother had the classic red box *Starter Set* from the ’80s and it allowed the siblings to connect in a way they otherwise might have found difficult.

“It might sound weird because an eight-year-old and a twelve-year-old don’t feel like they are that far apart in ages. But a difference of four years at that age is massive. I wanted to spend more time with my brother and to have something in common with him, and D&D gave us a way to communicate and a shared purpose,” he says, revealing that this story about his entrance into roleplaying actually formed part of the discussion that led to the the *D&D Young Adventurer’s Guides* being commissioned.

“When I was a kid I was obsessed with any kind of book that would codify and organize fictional information. I loved the *Monster Manual* and books like the *Official Handbook of the Marvel Universe*. That was especially true if they included big, beautiful artwork and descriptions of the kinds of things that existed in these worlds. I realized that the more artwork we could put into the *D&D Young Adventurer’s Guides*, the better.”

Zub says it would have been easy to grab established art from existing D&D books but he wanted to provide as much new material as possible. Each of the guides includes over seventy new illustrations to tap into the imagination of the next generation of players: “This doesn’t feel like a stripped-down version of the *Monster Manual* or the *Players Handbook*. We’re giving you different tidbits and showing off elements of D&D that don’t usually get visualized.”



Elf

Zub’s writing team—Stacy King and Andrew Wheeler—wanted the detail in the book to help spark stories in readers’ minds. This includes “natural threads” that have been woven throughout, adding a depth to the material that can be discovered by readers. He cites the *Monsters & Creatures* book, which includes regular beasts, certain sub-sections (giants, dragons, and vampires, for example), as well as a handful of named legendary creatures from D&D canon. One of those is Strahd von Zarovich from Ravenloft.

“We’re not telling people they have to follow this or that specific thread. But they’re very easy for readers to discover. When I was a kid, I put a lot of time and effort into my equipment list—here’s what’s in my backpack and I’m ready for anything. I can make a fire, I’ve got a bedroll, a tent, a rope, a grappling hook. In the *Warriors & Weapons* book we have a section that’s all about adventuring packs and one of those is for a vampire hunter, containing everything needed to hunt them down. Then, in the *Wizards & Spells* book, we added legendary items such as the *Sunsword*, which is a vampire-slaying magic weapon, while in the *Dungeons & Tombs* book, one of the legendary places is Castle Ravenloft.



“There’s a clear through line so you can imagine yourself making a character who’s going on a quest to try and defeat Strahd in Castle Ravenloft, and here are the items you need. You don’t have to use the guides that way but it’s really easy to put all this information together and see the through line in all four books.”

Readers can have fun drawing those lines between strands across multiple books but they will also be challenged in more traditional ways. Zub and his team have added short fiction hooks between each section, which ask readers to think about what they would do in specific situations.

“Each chapter ends with a question, asking readers how they would get themselves out of a specific scenario, or simply getting them to think about where the story could go from there. We’re training people to think about their collaborative part in the story. It’s not something that’s happening on the page, it’s something you are invested in and are making decisions about,” he explains.

The goal of this project was to allow young players to find the pieces of D&D that are already out there, and to get excited about

the lore as they imagine themselves going on adventures

“It’s all about possibilities. We don’t simply want those fiction and encounter options to ask, ‘Do you fight?’ or ‘Do you run?’ There are so many different types of encounters you can have. Can you negotiate peace without having to start combat? Can you sneak into an area or convince someone you’re not a threat?

“We wanted to explore all the different possibilities of an encounter so it becomes natural for players to ask ‘What are my options?’ and ‘What other things can we do?’ rather than have their first instinct be to pull out their sword and say ‘Okay, let’s get ’em!’ Yes, the game can be about killing monsters, getting treasure, and becoming more powerful. But that’s just one part of playing D&D and it’s by no means the most memorable part.”

The goal of this project was to allow young players to find the pieces of D&D that are already out there, and to get excited about the lore as they imagine themselves going on adventures. Yet Zub says the finished products will go even further.

“I look at these books as an introduction for anybody. You could hand this to an adult, and say, ‘Look, this is really simple.’ If you flip through it you can see all the options but there are no rules and no dice rolling, and no charts or other things like that. It’s just a bunch of cool stuff that lets you imagine your place in an adventuring party. I want them to see the potential and all this great artwork, so they can discover an idea they and their friends can bring to the table and build together.”

The first two titles in Ten Speed Press’s *Young Adventurer’s Guides* series, *Warriors & Weapons* and *Monsters & Creatures*, launch July 16. To hear more regarding the series, listen to Jim Zub’s interview or watch him on our recent *Dragon+* livestream.



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[Learn more](#)

The D&D Essentials Kit

Hot on the heels of the *D&D Young Adventurers Guides* comes a release designed to complement the *Dungeons & Dragons Starter Set*. It offers strong continuity from the story told in that *Starter Set*, with an adventure that uses the fictional town of Phandalin on the Sword Coast as its hub. It's also the first-ever official D&D fifth edition product designed to allow game play of groups as small as two players (one Dungeon Master and one adventurer) with the introduction of sidekicks.

Billed as a more expansive follow on purchase for new players, it allows them to create their own heroes, level up characters and sidekicks, and experience the thrill of being the Dungeon Master, as they make their way to defeat the fearsome inhabitant of Icespire Peak!

The box contains the essentials you need to run a D&D game with up to five friends:

- A 64-page rulebook that teaches you how to create level 1–6 characters and play the game.
- The introductory adventure *Dragon of Icespire Peak*.
- A double-sided 21" x 15" poster map for use with the *Dragon of Icespire Peak* adventure.
- A four-panel, folding DM screen.
- Six blank character sheets.
- Eleven polyhedral dice.

Eighty-one cards describing magic items, sidekicks, and other game elements, plus a folding box to hold all the cards.

Dragon+ spoke with senior producer Chris Perkins, lead designer on the project, to understand how it improves the gameplay experience for new players.

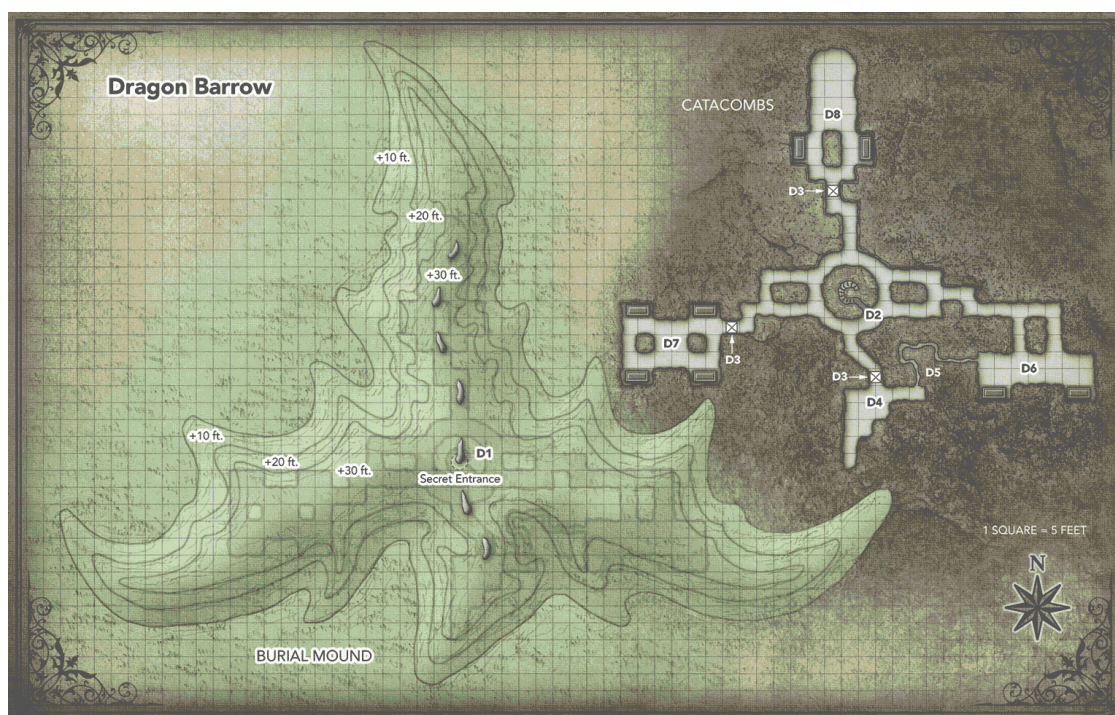
What do the new rules in the *D&D Essentials Kit* add to the *Starter Set* materials ?

The 64-page rulebook in the *D&D Essentials Kit* (DnDEK) is different from the rulebook in the *D&D Starter Set* (DnDSS) in several ways. The biggest difference is that the DnDSS rulebook assumes players are using the pre-generated characters included within the set, whereas the DnDEK rulebook assumes players are creating their own characters from scratch. Thus, the DnDEK rulebook includes character creation rules, which the DnDSS rulebook does not.

Each of the five classes presented in the DnDEK rulebook (bard, cleric, fighter, rogue, and wizard) comes with two subclass options culled from the *Player's Handbook*, and we also present a selection of backgrounds to help players further define their characters. The DnDEK rulebook allows characters to advance to 6th level, and includes its own selection of equipment, spells, and magic items, as well as rules for sidekicks.

There have been some really interesting changes to D&D maps. Does the poster map continue in that direction? And do you envisage it ending up on players' walls?

The half-size poster has a full-color map of the northern Sword Coast on one side, and a full-color map of the town of Phandalin on the other, both illustrated by Mike Schley. These maps originally appeared in the DnDSS adventure book, but we've blown them up in size to create player-friendly versions for this product. DM versions of these maps also appear in the adventure book.



(Select to view)

I drew all of the other maps in the DnDEK—namely the dungeon maps that appear in the adventure—and they were colored and textured by Jason Engle. All the maps in the DnDEK are full-color, as opposed to the black-and-white maps in other recent products. Whether the maps are wall-worthy, I can't say, but I like how they turned out.

What can we expect from the *Dragon of Icespire Peak* adventure, which returns to Phandalin?

Dragon of Icespire Peak presents an iconic D&D threat: a white dragon that has moved into the region and upset the natural balance, causing distress among settlers and driving other monsters out of their natural habitats. The dragon serves as a persistent, roaming threat until the characters confront it in its lair. The rest of the adventure is built around the characters gathering quests and rumors in Phandalin, which lead them to other locations. The adventure describes fourteen adventure locations, including a haunted dwarven fortress, a secret gnome enclave, a sinister lighthouse on the Sword Coast, a gold mine, and several locations in Neverwinter Wood.

The quest-based structure makes the adventure easy for DMs to run, and each adventure location can be fully explored in one or two game sessions. Players choose which quests and rumors they want to pursue, so there's lots of agency on both sides of the DM screen. An

intrepid DM can also combine elements of *Dragon of Icespire Peak* with elements of *Lost Mine of Phandelver*, creating an even more expansive D&D campaign based around Phandalin. The two adventures stand together, arm-in-arm.

Sidekicks will allow groups as small as two people—a DM and one adventurer—to play D&D. How will they work?

The sidekick rules were first introduced as an *Unearthed Arcana* article. A simplified version of those rules appears in the DnDEK rulebook, along with pre-generated stat blocks for three kinds of sidekicks: expert, spellcaster, and warrior. If the Dungeon Master is running the adventure with a single player, the DM can either create a sidekick for that player using the rules or let the player choose from one of nine pre-generated sidekicks described on cards included in the boxed set.

The quest-based structure makes the adventure easy for DMs to run, and each adventure location can be fully explored in one or two game sessions

A sidekick works like a character, gaining hit points, abilities, and spells in the case of a spellcaster as they advance in level. However, the sidekick is simpler to run, and the features it gains are super straightforward. Ideally, the player runs both their character and the sidekick, but the DM can run the sidekick if that's too much of a burden for the player. The DM can help the player choose a sidekick that complements their character—a warrior sidekick to accompany a wizard character, for example—but the final choice is up to the player.

Alongside those sidekicks, what else features on the eighty-one cards describing D&D game elements?

In addition to the sidekick cards, we have a bunch of magic item cards that can be handed to the players whenever they acquire a new magic item, as well as quest cards to be handed out when players pick up new quests. There are also initiative cards allowing DMs and players to keep track of everyone's place in the combat order, condition cards summarizing the various conditions in the game, and

combat summary cards to help players remember the steps in a typical round of combat.

What's on the four-panel Dungeon Master's screen?

The DM screen has all-new art on the outside and information for the DM on the inside. That information is not adventure-specific, so the DM can continue using the screen even after running *Dragon of Icespire Peak*. It includes stuff you'd expect, such as the distance a party can travel overland in a day, the ranges of torches and whatnot, and condition summaries. The information is laid out beautifully, making it easy for DMs to find what they're looking for.

The D&D Essentials Kit is currently under construction and further details will follow shortly.



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BEHIND THE SCREEN



Behind the Screen: Heroes of Hawethorne

Friendly local gaming store owner Rob Gruber runs a popular Dungeons & Dragons game for younger players. When their moms wanted to know what all the fuss was about, Ladies of Hawethorne was born.

Octavia Wolton

With anywhere between 400 and 500 characters playing in the monthly games at its store, Good Times Games and Electronics in Prince Rupert, British Columbia is a popular place to scratch your Dungeons & Dragons itch. Its *Heroes of Hawethorne* campaign has entered its ninth year, with players as young as five-years-old becoming party members alongside ‘veterans’ who are now pushing fifteen or sixteen.



“Lots of our players have been here for the nine years we’ve been running *Heroes of Hawethorne* and they are still as enthusiastic and excited about the game today as they were when they were six-years-old,” store owner Rob Gruber tells *Dragon+*. “It’s neat because I’ve been planning our summer program and I’ve been able to hire three of them as Dungeon Masters. They grew up in the program and I’ve been training them in our little store here since they were six or seven-years-old. It’s awesome to see them take the reins.”

With such a thriving community based around his store, it shouldn’t have been a surprise that Gruber got to make an onstage appearance at the annual Games and Manufacturing Association awards in Reno, Nevada. But picking up the trophy for the Outstanding Organized Play Program still came as a shock.

“GAMA is a big association and we were happy to be nominated for our *Hawethorne* campaigns and our summer camp program, alongside twenty other huge stores. I was talking to a guy who has one of the biggest stores on the East Coast and he said, ‘Nothing compares to what you guys are doing up there in that little town!’ But it was still a surprise when everyone was cheering for us when they called my name. I couldn’t believe it! I was very happy just to be nominated. I believe this was the first time this award has been won by a store in a population center under 100,000 people.”



The Parent Trap

Gruber says his two-and-a-half-hour roleplaying sessions initially gave parents a much-needed break. They could drop off their kids and go grocery shopping or even take the rare opportunity to have an uninterrupted nap. But when they came to pick those kids up they would see their enthusiasm and hear all these amazing stories from *Heroes of Hawethorne*.



Midwest Moms

You might also have seen Xander Jeanneret's *Midwest Moms Play Dungeons & Dragons*. Xander (*Library Bards, Relics & Rarities*) has played Dungeons & Dragons for a long time but was never able to convince his mom to roll some dice. In this heart-warming video, Xander finally gets the chance to introduce his mother and her friends from Wisconsin to the wonders of cooperative storytelling. Watch as four moms from the Midwest take a journey they'll never forget and finally understand what makes D&D so special, not just for their sons and daughters, but for everyone—in this video directed and edited by *Rivals of Waterdeep*'s Carlos Luna!

[WATCH HERE](#)

“The kids are super excited about D&D when they leave here, and their parents are happy to hear them using big words and being so enthusiastic about something that is not a console or a video game. Some of the parents were also enticed by the stories. The kids would try to explain what happened and some of the moms would then come see me to find out what really happened, because they didn't have a clue what their kids are talking about!”

With such a huge number of enthusiastic players, it wasn't long before some of the parents wanted to understand more about this game their kids were so caught up in. Ever the innovator, Gruber's answer was to invite some of them to play D&D and see what all the fuss was about.

“I pitched a game to some of the parents so they could understand it,” Gruber remembers. “It was mostly mothers that asked in the beginning and we started out with a core group of six moms. I wanted to empower them and make them ‘cool’ in the eyes of their kids, giving them a chance to step out of their ‘mom’ roles and be super heroes even for just a few hours a week.

“I ran them through a little adventure and they fell in love with it so much they wanted to continue playing. From there it's been a little over two years and *Ladies of Hawethorne* has grown significantly from its starting six players—I made the sixty-first character last week! And it certainly isn't just moms anymore. Our original name

for the group was ‘Mothers of Hawethorne’ but not all of our players have kids so it felt right to change it to the Ladies of Hawethorne and include everyone under that unified banner.”



Crucially, Gruber didn’t dumb the game down for them, although he does create all the characters following a little input from the players. They get to choose major aspects such as the character’s race and career and he fleshes out the rest to give them a jump start.

“I give them a character they can walk right into and play. We do our signups on a Facebook page and it’s as easy as coming along and meeting the group you’re playing with,” he says. “If they

fall in love with the character they can keep it, but if they want to make changes we’ll make those because it’s not that difficult to make adjustments. We’re thinking long term for them to enjoy those characters.

“As a DM I’m not very heavy on the rules and my games are story driven with lots of narrative options along the way. I learned from running games for the kids that if I stop and open a rulebook—even if it’s just for one minute—I’ve lost them because I’m going to lose my momentum. I’ve been doing this so long now I can create a common sense modifier for anything that’s thrown at me and I’m fairly confident in my ability to come up with an answer even if I don’t know it. It’s usually something that’s reasonable and fair and it’s always in the favor of the players. We’re just going to put a modifier on it, let a dice roll and have some fun. If you and your table are having fun, you are doing Dungeons & Dragons right.”

The current campaign is called *A Pirate Named Shadow*, with plenty of adventures on the ocean that pre-date the release of *Ghosts of Saltmarsh*. The storyline began with the party having dreams of a young pirate named Shadow, who at the time was only twelve years old, although she has grown progressively older every time they’ve

had successive dreams about her. Shadow seems to need their help and gives them hints, which has led them on a long journey to acquire a ship.

“We’re in it pretty deep and it’s been a great adventure. I’ve got WizKids’ big ship to make it awesome. We’ve printed some really cool desert islands to have adventures in and I like to think it’s some of my best-ever story writing. Being more adult-driven allows me to make it that little bit more challenging and feature some really cool narration. They’re loving it and they sometimes come dressed as pirates.”

The Social Network

Gruber runs the same campaign six times over two weeks, allowing as many moms as want to join to sign up on Facebook. With so many players, the age range of *Ladies of Hawthorne* reaches from twenty to seventy and the group is dominated by people who really enjoy the social aspect of it. The food options certainly sound more nutritious than the bag of chips and bottle of cola most players usually bring to a gaming table.

“The food they bring every session is just off the charts,” Gruber raves. Part of the social aspect of these players is they get together for a potluck, which is always fantastic. It’s a full meal and I don’t eat lunch the days I’m running *Ladies of Hawthorne*! I think I would be the envy of any Dungeon Master on the planet. For one birthday party session they wanted the theme to be pajamas and breakfast, so everyone turned up that evening in onesies and PJs. We had a waffle iron and waffles were coming off the grill right there in the room.”



The kids who regularly play at Good Times Games and Electronics have also branched out into live-action roleplay (AKA Larping),

taking their sword fighting and spell flinging to local parks. It's a side of roleplaying the parents are also starting to consider.

"They definitely want to. I've already got a couple of adult groups who have hired me to run some corporate events for them once the weather's a little more predictable, so they can try their hand at sword fighting. There's one mom in particular who has been bugging me to do it and I always say, "Okay, do you guys want to play D&D or do you want to go sword fighting?"

It's no surprise to hear of D&D players taking a more live-action approach in Prince Rupert, British Columbia, although it's great to hear the parents are thinking of joining in the fun. Even the mayor of the town turns up to play in special events alongside other local celebrities for the holiday extravaganza Good Times Games runs.



"Everybody's a Dungeons & Dragons fan here!" Gruber says, proud of the diversity of his players. "In our kids' group some of them are band kids, some are hockey players, some basketball players. And we probably have more girls than boys, including a couple of *Girls of Hawthorne* groups that sign up together because they want to play as a group. The parents love that, too."

In the meantime, one local event has already excited some of Gruber's players. The town's yearly parade has chosen a theme that will be very familiar to those currently playing through the storyline of *A Pirate Named Shadow*.

"The theme of this year's **Seafest Parade** is Pirates of the Pacific. I don't know if they've been stalking our Facebook page or what, but it's going to be awesome. I've teamed up with a local printer and we are going to do up one of my work trucks as a galleon and I've got a couple of cannons already made. It's going to be fantastic. I bet you there will be 40 pirates with me for the parade."

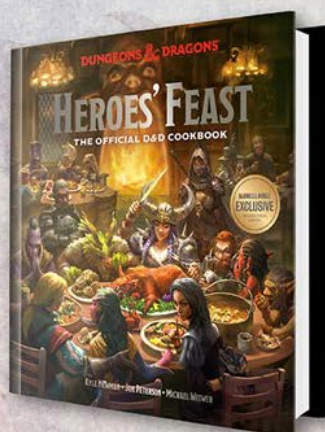
It's all a far cry from that first table of moms who just wanted to find out more about the game their kids were enjoying so much.

“Not one of the ladies from the 60 or so players we have come from a Dungeons & Dragons background. They had never played or even thought of playing prior to our little program,” Gruber says. “And they’ve made best friends by coming and learning to play. They come from different areas and have diverse jobs and backgrounds, but now they’re in the store talking and they’re active on the forums. They’re by far my most fanatical customer base for D&D. Some of them never thought they would be Dungeons & Dragons players. I always ask them, ‘What would you’ve been doing tonight two years ago?’ They just can’t believe how it’s changed their lives.”

To find out more about *Heroes of Hawethorne* connect with Good Times Games and Electronics on [Facebook](#).

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GIFTS FOR YOUR ENTIRE ADVENTURING PARTY



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Extra Life

Bob Nelson and Braydon Fiveash from the Adventuring Guild Podcasting Network share their love of homebrew content as Dragon+ offers this platform to thank them for their generous Extra Life charitable donation.



In 2018 Dungeons & Dragons participated in its sixth consecutive year with the Extra Life charity, benefiting the Children's Miracle Network Hospitals. With huge appreciation to our entire community, we raised over \$200k—and as thanks to our generous donors, D&D Team members offered a series of rewards.

*These included Q&A discussions within Dragon+, which we are pleased to continue this issue with The Adventuring Guild Podcasting Network. On behalf of the **D&D Team** we thank them for their support.*

If you're interested in taking part in Extra Life 2019 as part of the **Dungeons & Dragons team** we encourage you to sign up. Just click "Join Our Team" at the top of the page!

"I first got started with **Extra Life** about three to four years ago when my wife Jessica and I went to the Children's Hospital & Medical Center of Omaha," says **Bob Nelson**. "They had a flyer up about it

and I looked up the details after our appointment. My oldest daughter, Amelia, has congenital scoliosis—though you wouldn’t know it from how active and rambunctious she is. I wasn’t able to take part the first year I found out about Extra Life because less than six-month-old babies are a handful, but the second year and every year since then I’ve tried to either run a game or donate—usually both.



Bob Nelson

“I’ve personally run three Extra Life games in the greater Kearney, Nebraska area. With lots of support from the guild we have raised close to \$500 total for the cause. I ran a modified *Storm King’s Thunder* campaign for the first two games. For the third session I tried to recreate one of my favorite video games growing up and turn it into a D&D adventure. It was an old PC title called *Arcanum: Of Steamworks*

and Magick Obscura, and it was picked up by the *Homebrew Review* podcast. Hopefully this year we will be even more successful at getting the word out using The Adventuring Guild Podcasting Network. We’re planning to run two games: one in-person game at a local gaming store and another online, live streaming on the Twitch channel we are currently setting up. One of those game days will be on the official Extra Life November date and we will be opening up a whole new continent as part of our *Chaos Plan* podcast.”

WATCH ON TWITCH

“I hadn’t heard anything about Extra Life until I started listening to *Dragon Talk* and a few other podcasts that were discussing it and spreading the word. This year I heard Bob would once again be running a game in support of Extra Life, and I felt I should do my part as a member of the D&D and Adventurers League communities and make a donation,” says *Braydon Fiveash*, another member of The Adventuring Guild Podcasting Network. “I’m looking forward to many more events in the future and hopefully I’ll be able to take part

in those in spite of the distance between myself and the rest of the team.”

The Adventuring Guild Podcasting Network

“The Adventuring Guild started its life as a loose collection of players from my home campaign. I DMed for a local game store and when all of my Adventurers League players jumped into my homebrew campaigns, we started calling ourselves a guild of sorts. Since the store in Kearney was a 20-minute drive each way I wasn’t able to DM as often once work got busier, so I started running games in Minden where I live. With more room to set up, I started recording games as much as possible since I’m a big fan of running a real timeline and my memory is less than great,” says Nelson.

“I’m also a huge supporter of homebrewing and encouraged my players to choose what they wanted to be instead of sticking 100% to the core rulebooks. But as you know there are thousands of homebrew options available out there, and many are less than balanced. After searching online I could only find written articles on homebrew.

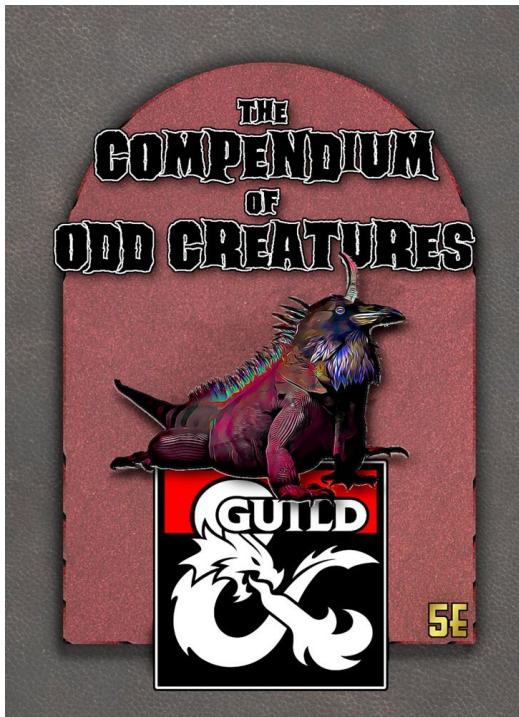
“These articles were great if you wanted to find out about specific mechanics, but that’s only a small part. I instead decided to try these homebrew options out and record the consequences. We started recording our first episodes in the summer of 2017 and released our first podcast episode on January 1, 2018. I’ve been lucky enough to have the help of some amazing people with a wide variety of talents so most of my ‘job’ is simply to help get games scheduled and be the DM. The rest of the guild pitches in when I need ideas for new episodes, when we need intro and outro music, or if I need a new image or map drawn up.”





“My first interaction with the *Adventuring Guild* podcast came when I found a Reddit post about them,” remembers Fiveash. “At the time I was looking for a new podcast to fill the long evenings at work and I’ve always loved creating and reviewing homebrew content for D&D. I binged all of the episodes, joined up on Patreon, and was playing with them a few weeks later. I’ve been playing with them ever since.”

“I’m *super* passionate about homebrew,” adds Nelson. “I could spend hours helping someone to develop the exact character they want to play for a game—I love the official classes but there is so much more out there that is really well made. Everyone has a unique and interesting point of view. We are blessed with several authors within our guild who have published material, including Braydon Fiveash’s **B5 Homebrews**, Lydia



Offee's **Commander and Harlequin** classes, and myself.

Mike 'Stygious' Miller has also been working on a very promising Auramancer that I can't wait to see finished. Many other members of the group have helped homebrew quite a bit and in collaboration with B5 Homebrew we actually created the *Scroll of Strange Races Volume 2*. Currently, we are drafting the *Compendium of Curious Subclasses*, which is our 2019 guild project and will hopefully be up on the DMs Guild this year."

"It's been great getting the other guild members collaborating on homebrew content," says Fiveash. "The *Scroll of Strange Races Volume 2* was something we worked on together, following the **first volume** I'd created on my own. I'm looking forward to working on more projects with our guild, where everyone gets a say on what goes into it."

Bob Nelson is the founder member of **The Adventuring Guild Podcasting Network** which creates, tests, and champions epic homebrew content. You can connect with them on **Facebook, Twitter, and iTunes**.

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Streaming Highlights

This issue's highlights reel includes movie-quality FX on a small scale, the voyage of the MHS *Second Chance*, and a few moments from D&D Live 2019 you may have missed!



D&D LIVE 2019: THE DESCENT

They're calling it "D&D Summer Camp"— [see our full feature](#) in this issue—but if you weren't part of the gathering in Los Angeles, don't panic! We expertly captured all five live games from the main stage, while a little bit of guerilla filming took place when the L.A. power grid took its own trip to the Nine Hells.

RELICS & RARITIES

DM Deborah Ann Woll kicks off *D&D Live 2019: The Descent* with players Jasmine Bhullar, Julia Dennis, Janina Gavankar, Xander Jeanneret, Matthew Lillard, and Tommy Walker on another artifact-hunting expedition. Watch for the amazing in-game puzzle that took

Woll nine hours to handcraft!

D&D LIVE: THE DESCENT GAME SESSION 1

DM Jeremy Crawford almost steals the show from his own cast (Kelly D'Angelo, Taliesin Jaffe, Taran Killam, Alex Lee, Joe Manganiello, and Surena Marie) as he brings night hag Mad Maggie screaming to life. Watch for Crawford's hypnotic movement as he commits to driving an infernal war machine and doesn't stop.

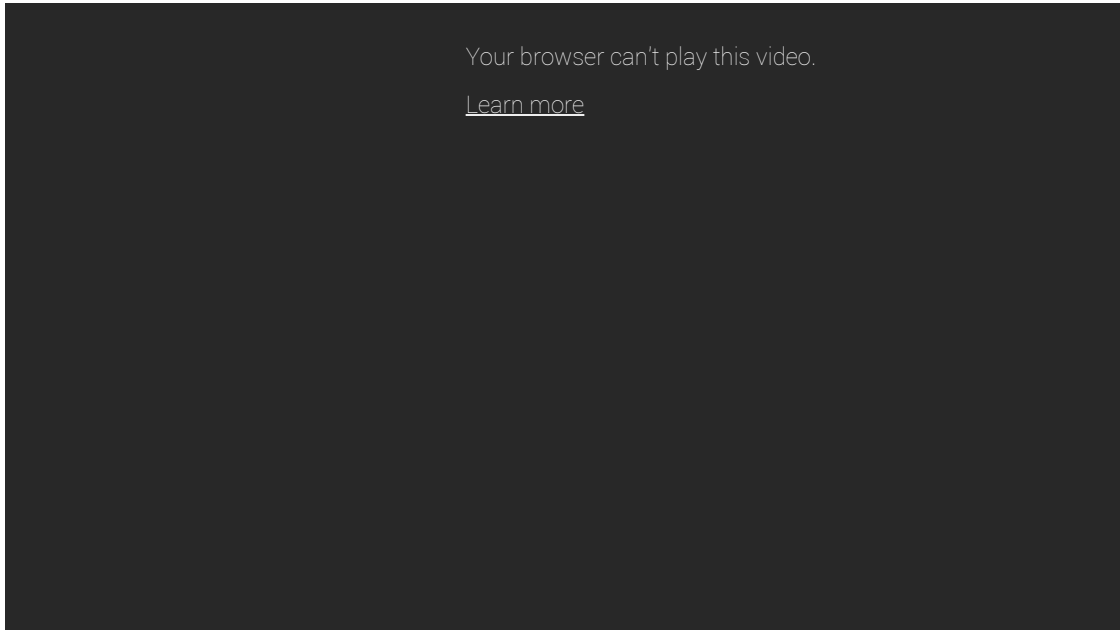
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[Learn more](#)

D&D LIVE: THE DESCENT GAME SESSION 2

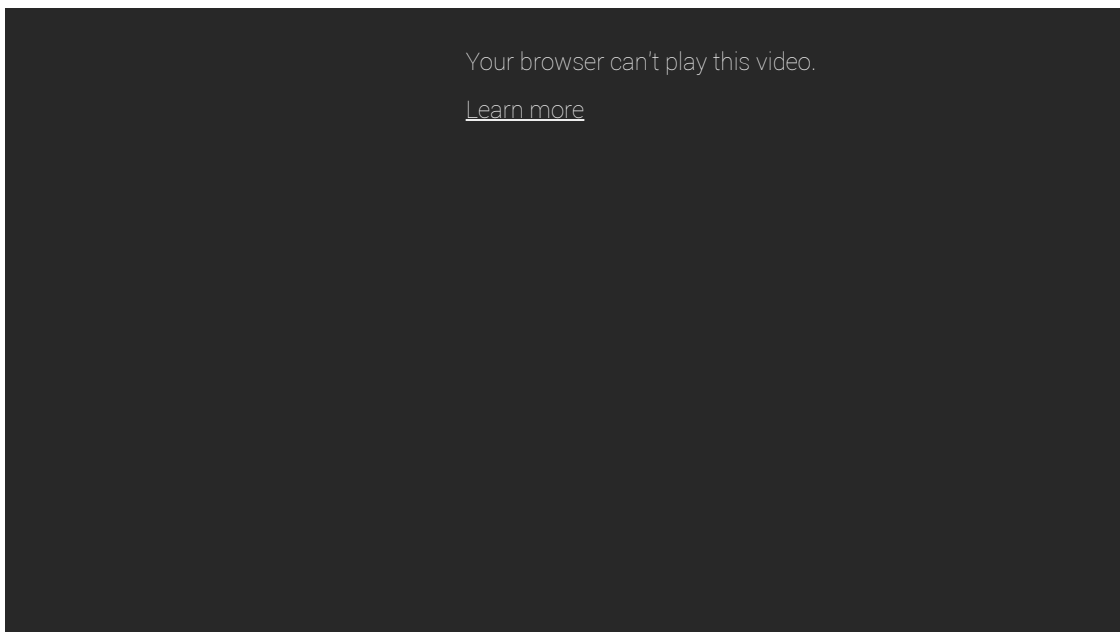
Chuck Barris has nothing on this game when DM Kate Welch sets her players the task of hosting the perfect date to woo the heart of Mad Maggie. Malik Forte, Jerry Holkins, Matthew Lillard, Joe

Manganiello, Clint McElroy, and Travis McElroy brought the crazy in one of the funniest games you'll watch this year. Watch for a meal option you'll truly never forget (plus an audacious last-gasp maneuver by Lillard).



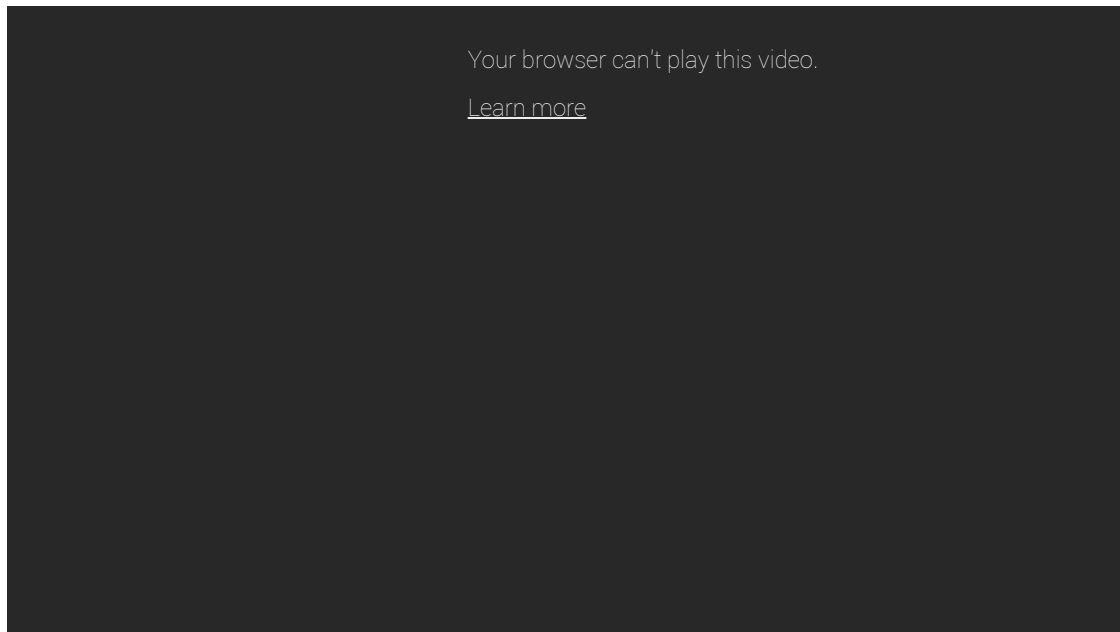
D&D LIVE: THE DESCENT GAME SESSION 3

DM Marisha Ray finds Matthew Lillard's character Gark loitering beside the River Styx, the only sound the drum of his own heartbeat, before the party is filled out by Krystina Arielle, Satine Phoenix, Patrick Rothfuss, Kate Welch, and Deborah Ann Woll. Watch for Woll's character Twiggy and her incredible talking squirrel Trixie.

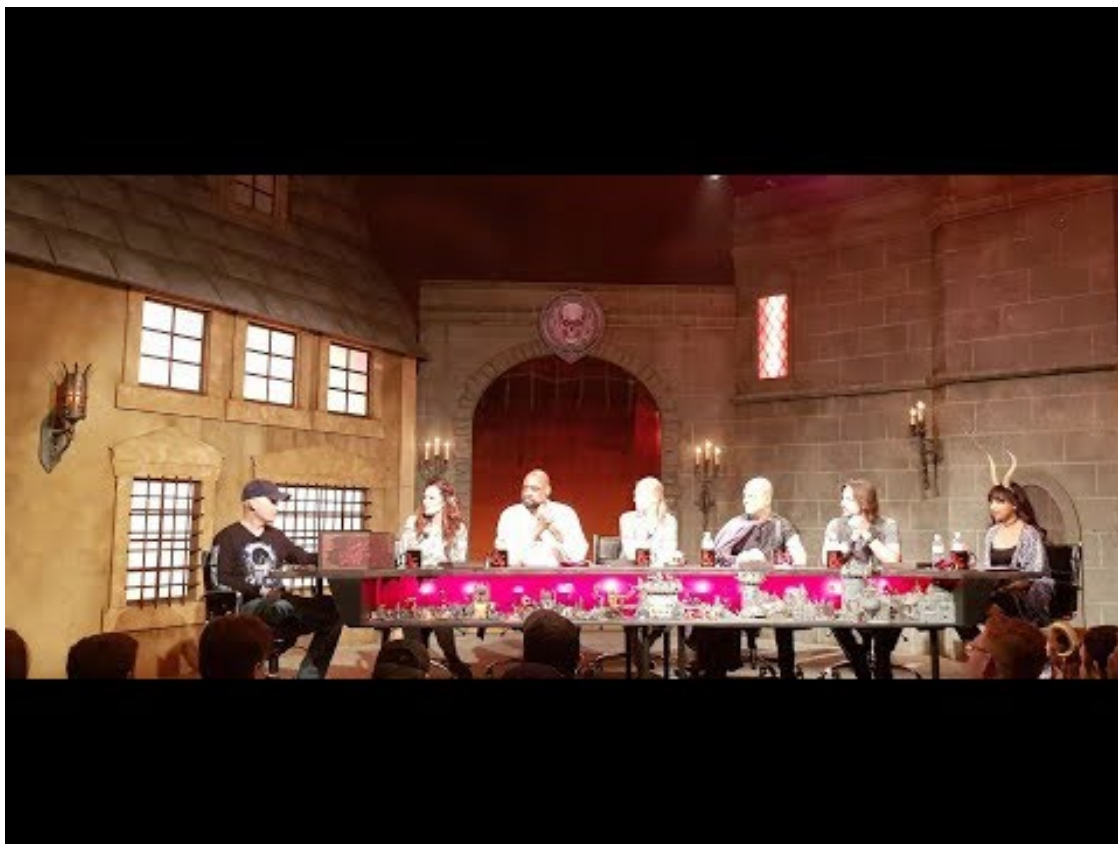


D&D LIVE: THE DESCENT GAME SESSION 4

DM Chris Perkins wasn't pulling any punches as he plunged Mica Burton, Anna Prosser, B. Dave Walters, Deborah Ann Woll and crew into a bleak Hellscape. Watch for Jim Zub fully committing to character as Minsc and getting his head shaved, paired with Matthew Mercer reprising his role as his insanely adorable miniature giant space hamster companion.



And if you want to see what happened when the power went out, *Dragon+* Editor-in-Chief was on the spot with his cell phone to capture audience selfies and infernal cake-based deals.



D4

Dustin Fletcher is a Set and Specialty Costumer and Ager/Dyer for film and television (*Avengers: Infinity War*, *The Walking Dead*). Devan Henderson (*Stranger Things*, *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2*) is a Set and Specialty Costumer, Prop Maker, Set Dresser, and Ager/Dyer for film and television. Together they co-DM *D4*, leading an incredible cast through an epic urban campaign.



The pair have previously run an almost ten-year live-action game where they built up their dark, gritty, emotional form of storytelling using props, makeup and special effects to weave intricate and elaborate stories. They now bring much of that feel to *D4* with their elaborate custom-built maps and terrain.

“We build custom maps for every combat we can perceive being possible. Where many other streams either rely solely on theater of the mind, or beautiful-yet-expensive resin-casted terrain, we wanted to show off our skills and reveal what you can create on a budget,” Fletcher tells *Dragon+*.

“We started at home with classic vinyl map and wet-erase markers, as most DMs do, but found joy in crafting maps to fully immerse our players the same way we used to with LARP. Our backgrounds allow us to think of the map like a movie set, to include design layout, lighting, and special FX—just on a smaller scale.”

D4 runs weekly at 4pm PST on Sundays and you can find the full back catalogue of episodes on [YouTube](#). Visit the [Rock Punch website](#) to learn more about Dustin and Devan’s projects and to

buy D4 merchandise.

ADVENTURE, THEY WROTE

“*Adventure, They Wrote* is a D&D actual play podcast that follows the exploits of the Waterdeep Detective Agency. Led by a reformed goblin criminal, its staff explore a gritty noire-inspired urban landscape while collecting clues, investigating leads, and avoiding attention from the city guard,” says Kat Kruger (*d20 Dames*), who plays the Countess in this ragtag group of sleuths.

“The agency recently solved the murder of one of Waterdeep’s most notorious smugglers. In *Season Two*, they’re in search of the Amnese Dragon. This mysterious relic of untold value and power disappeared without a trace from a secured location. How was it stolen? Where is it now? What devious plans does the thief have?

“Only the **Dungeon Master** knows for sure, but **Max**, **Selene**, Doran, **Ledger**, and **the Countess** are on the case and ready to find out.”

LISTEN ON SOUNDCLOUD

New episodes of *Adventure, They Wrote: The Amnese Dragon* are available weekly at **the official website** and you connect with the party on **Twitter**, **Facebook**, and **Instagram**.

GEEKS TABLE

Geeks Table is a South African education and gaming facilitation company. Run by Guy Sclanders (who currently lives in Japan) and his friend and business partner Derrick Greyvensteyn (also known as the Web Goblin), you may know them better for their show *How to be a Great GM*. But you’ll also now recognize them for their new Dungeons & Dragons series, *Ghosts of Saltmarsh: The Call of the Kraken*, currently airing on twitch.tv/dnd.

“The *MHS Second Chance*, a fine ship with a fine crew, finds itself in

deep fog and with little wind to move her forward. Her Captain, Victor Salt, has set course for Saltmarsh—the harbor-city located on the Azure Sea coast. But with the doldrums they are not going anywhere,” Sclanders tells *Dragon+*.

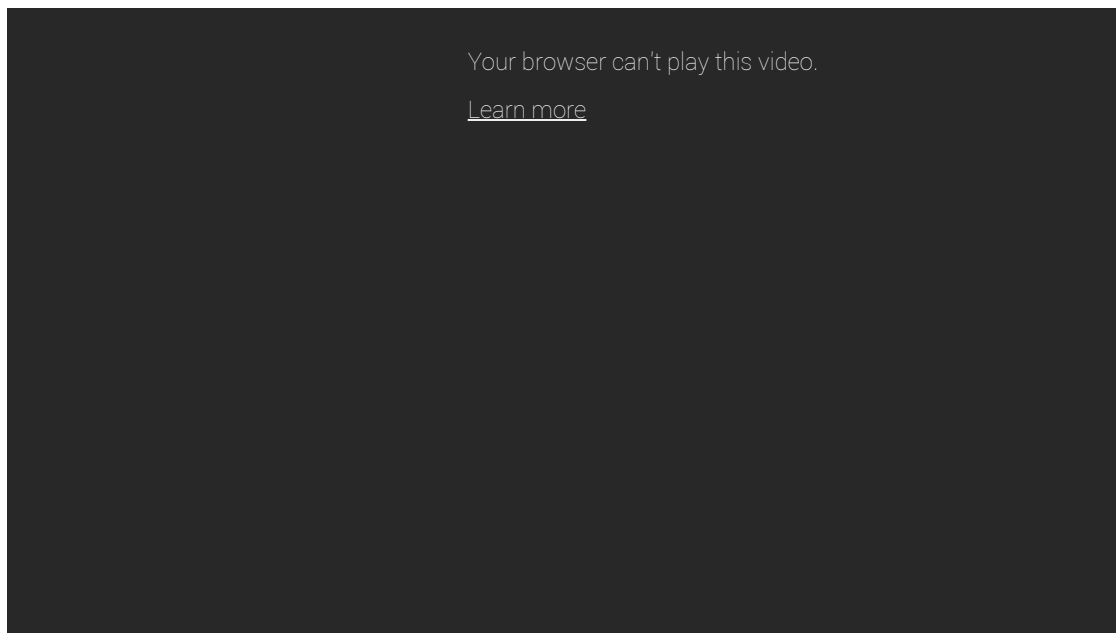
The series features an international cast of players exploring the material presented in the latest official Dungeons & Dragons adventure book, which is **available now**. In the pre-show, Guy takes us through his plans for the episode so we can learn what he has planned and what he intends to accomplish during the campaign as a DM.

Join **DM Guy** and players **Mhaire, Caeora, Michael, Janet**, and Jenny on Saturdays at 1pm PST on the **official D&D Twitch channel**, with episodes available on **YouTube** a few days after.

MONSTERS & FABLES

Dungeon Master T.J. Storm and player Jennifer Kretchmer—Rapunzel herself!—give us the inside track on *Monsters & Fables*’ fairy tale-inspired story **earlier in this issue**. Having left their party stranded in Avernus at the end of their *D&D Live 2019* livestream, *Dragon+* was keen to find out what might happen next to Prince Al ad-Din (Francis Capra), Red Riding Hood (Rachel Miner) and Mowgli (Omar Najam).

“In terms of *Season Two of Monsters & Fables*, so much of mythology and legend centers around the liminal phases of adolescence—the nether realm between childhood and adulthood, where often children are exploring a new kind of independence and feelings or fears that they may not want to admit to an adult. There’s a profound loneliness in that, but also a profound innocence,” Kretchmer tells *Dragon+*.



You can watch *Monsters & Fables* on the [official D&D YouTube channel](#) and connect with [T.J. Storm](#), [Francis Capra](#), [Jennifer Kretchmer](#), [Rachel Miner](#), and [Omar Najam](#) on Twitter.

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Fiction: The Henchman

A plunder gone awry, a ticking clock on the high seas, and a world weary carpenter who's stuck in the middle. This month's story, inspired by Ghosts of Saltmarsh, tells the tale of a pirate crew having bitten off much more than they can chew.

Mark Price & David Roomes

MAN WALKS INTO a tavern. Older swab. Sure, he's got his share of scars, but this is Saltmarsh. We've seen a few scars.

He's just kicked open the door to this stink hole of a grog shop right at the docks, and now our eyes are on him. Man's soaking wet and covered in blood, but the thing that really grabs the room is what's slung over his shoulders, his knees nearly buckling under the weight. And that's a *more* bloodied and very dead beast of a hammerhead shark.

What's more, everyone can see that sticking straight out of the brain of this shark is a humble carpenter's knife, buried near to the hilt.

The man looks up and glares at us like he's daring us to utter a word. And no one does. We're drunk, not stupid. But then the barkeep says something. He shrugs at the man and says, "Bad day?"

So our man staggers his way to the bar, leaving puddles of seawater and blood and maybe a little piss as he goes. Got the bearing of someone well past the care that the fish market's but two lots away, but who wants to correct him? This is clearly a man who needs his drink right *now*, which I can respect.

He strains for a second, heaves the shark off his shoulders and slaps the beastie down onto a stool. Props it up and over the bar, and wrangles its head so it points upright. Blood's coming up right out of the gills, just covers the whole bar like molasses.

Then I swear this next part is true: the man himself sits his old haunches right down next to it! Puts his arm around it, snaps up two fingers at the barkeep. Ales for him *and* his mate! Barkeep takes it in stride, draws two pints of his best swill. Sets down one in front of our man, one in front of the shark.

"Ain't seen you here in a while..." starts the barkeep. "Name's Hatch, right?"

Our man says nothing, just downs his pint in the blink of an eye. Grabs the second one, guzzles it right down.

"Guessin' your friend quit the drink," barkeep says. The man motions for another round. Barkeep draws him up another two pints, and it's

steady as she goes.

“Ship’s carpenter, ain’t ya?” He sets the ales down in front of him. “Scrapin’ for jobs as they come and go...”

Still no reply from the man, but our barkeep, he’s the ox-minded type. Keeps at it. “Must’ve been one today you wish you could take back...”

Well suddenly, the carpenter snaps a fiery look at him and the two of ’em lock eyes for what seems a time. Then, the man lets out an exhausted breath as deep as the harbor. He turns his head towards the room, as if seeing us for the very first time.

And then he tells us everything.



HATCH PACED THE deck, trying to process what he’d heard.

“Just so I get this straight,” he said. “You’re saying there’s a *baby kraken* in the ship’s hold?”

A thundering crash against the hull below them shook the bulwark and threatened to knock the crew to their feet.

“Well,” the mage responded, “more like an adolescent.”

The carpenter stood mouth agape, struggling to reign in the whirlwind of shock and distill his frustration down to a single coherent question:

“*Why?*”

The mage leaned back against the deck rail and crossed his arms. (“Resnik”—was that what the others called him? Hatch tried to remember.) His fancy wizard robes and slick black hair framed a face that seemed frozen in a privileged smirk.

“Watch your tone, henchman. You’ve been with us less than an hour.” Resnik kicked at a rat, sending it over the rail and into the sea, squealing. “But given your limited worldview, I’ll be charitable. Why steal a kraken? Profit, mostly. But for me, also, the very challenge of the thing.”

Hatch's eye twitched as he attempted to form some sort of response. He glanced up at the stocky gnome who manned the tiller and caught her eye. The gnome only shrugged at the exchange and returned her gaze to the horizon.

The old carpenter sat down heavily on a pile of rope and began rubbing his temples.

"After all these years, you'd think I'd learn..."

"We know what we're doing," Resnik insisted. "We stole a sacred book along with the kraken. And I..." he said with a flourish, "have managed to decipher it."

"Well, cheers to your bloody greatness. Some of us work for a living and have to clean up the mess you're about to make."

"It's a treasure of information," the mage continued, ignoring the comment. "Filled with kraken lore, life cycle notes, customized spells for dealing with the beast, dietary—"

"Where'd you even *find* a kraken to steal?"

"That's the best part!" said the young mage excitedly. "It was already captured. We'd made progress with the underworld of the Styes for weeks, but then I stumbled upon a secretive cult of crazed fanatics! They were *raising* this beast! Turns out they were the ones snatching orphans off the streets and feeding them—"

"Are you insane?" Hatch bolted upright. "I've heard of this cult, they're *beyond* fanatical!"

"Yes, yes, Tharizdun, Lord of Decay. Nothing for a mere hired hand to worry about," Resnik dismissed with a wave. "They were bested by a superior group."

"And your group plans to sell this... this pet *house kraken* in Saltmarsh?"

"Velora has a contact there. And a warehouse with a granary pit large enough to keep it 'til the deal's done."

Hatch began pacing the deck again, his mind racing.

“And how’d you get it into the hold? Even an adolescent kraken must be...” he stretched his arms wide trying to encompass his imaginings, “kind of *big*, don’t you think?”

“Thirty-footer!” Resnik nodded. “You should see the tentacles. But the tome had a custom spell, ‘*diminishing repose*.’ I translated the text and used the spell to shrink it to roughly quarter-size and get it below deck.”

Hatch was unconvinced. Things were never this easy.

“So a *kraken* just let you shove it down into a hole without putting up a fight.”

“The spell shrinks the body, but also blankets the spirit, making it more easily managed,” answered the mage.

The carpenter rolled his eyes at this. The answer for everything type. Every group had one. And this one crossed his arms, indignant.

“If you were lettered, you might have read of such things....”

The mage’s disdainful pride gradually faded under Hatch’s withering stare.

“It wasn’t all easy,” admitted the mage. “We lost Sylvie and Kovo in the battle with the cultists. Kovo was our ship’s carpenter. That’s why we grabbed you so quickly on our way out of port. No way we’ll make it to Saltmarsh without a carpenter, not in this leaking crate.”

“The only reason I agreed was your captain—you said her name was Velora? She promised me fifty gold pieces. And yes, I need it that badly. But even with that much, I’m regretting setting foot on this—”

Another crash from below shook the ship, followed by the sound of heavily booted feet running up the stairs. A brawny half-orc in ring mail stopped at the deck.

“Resnik, boss says come down. Something wrong with squid thing.”

Hatch and Resnik exchanged glances and both followed the half-orc

below.

The half-orc led them down into the dimly lit interior. A statuesque woman in an elegant blue long coat stood next to a short, rat-faced fellow wearing a hooded woolen cloak.

Hatch had already met the blue-coated Velora. The half-orc and rat-faced man he didn't know. Just more nameless "heroes" with more bravado than brains.

Velora turned to them. "Runt here says the thing is bigger."

Resnik's default smirk dropped instantly. "*Bigger?* I'm sure that's not the case."

Runt peered a suspicious eye at the mage from the depths of his cloak. "When we left the Styes, 'twas small enough it could turn 'round, three barrels width on either side. But now the gap's half that."

She leveled her eyes at the mage. "You said the spell would last a full day."

"It should..." fumbled Resnik. "I mean, it will! The tome clearly states that using powdered ruby instead of pearl decreases the dissipation rate to—"

The captain stopped him with a raised hand. "How close are we to Saltmarsh?" she asked the half-orc.

The brute stepped to the stairs and bellowed up, "Grevik! How long to Saltmarsh?"

The gnome at the tiller yelled down. "Two hours if the wind holds!"

"Follow me," commanded Velora.

She opened the door and led them through the bulkhead into the main hold. Hatch's nose was met with an oppressive stench, like a whale rotting in a tank of brine. The wooden planks of the floor were slick with slime. Then he got his first good look at it.

For a full life on wind and wave, he'd only heard tales of what he

now beheld. Quarter-size or not, it was huge.

The hulking mass of glistening, scaled flesh expanded and contracted in a great rattling breath. Its bloated body lay on the floor facing away from them. Beyond the body lay coils of tentacles writhing in spasms, like a waking slumber. A spiny, fish-like tail flapped against the wet wooden deck in front of them.

The creature stirred, shifted its bulk slightly, and brought one of its eyes into view. The red, alien orb swiveled forward and peered at them. Was it aware?

“Runt’s right,” said the half-orc. “It’s bigger...”

“Carpenter,” the captain turned her sights on him. “If it keeps growing, it’s going to break through the hold, maybe even the hull. You need to remove this bulkhead, door and all. We’ll make room for it and buy time until Resnik can recast the spell.”

“I’m not going *near* that damned thing.” Hatch turned and started heading back to the door. The half-orc grabbed him by the collar, yanked him back and pinned him against the wall. In a flash, the brute’s dagger was at his throat.

“You’ll do as I say, henchman,” Velora said calmly.

“Don’t be afraid,” assured Resnik. “With the spell in place, it’s practically asleep.”

“You don’t understand. The bulkhead supports the deck,” Hatch protested, “I take it out, it’ll compromise the whole ship. The next storm, or even some bad chop could sink us....”

The kraken let out another breath and a tentacle pounded against the far wall, shattering a glass lantern.

“...and if *that’s* asleep,” he continued, “what happens if it wakes up?”

“Easy,” replied Velora, “we find another carpenter.”

The captain made a gesture and the orc released his grip and lowered the blade. She sized up the old man, stepping to within inches of him.

“Can we make it to Saltmarsh without the bulkhead?” she asked, hand at the hilt of her cutlass.

“Probably....”

“Then I don’t care about the next storm *or* this stolen ship. Take it out.”

Velora turned and marched back up the stairs with the others, leaving a humble carpenter with aching muscles and a bad liver alone with the most terrible monstrosity that ever ravaged the high seas.

As he remained there with only the creature’s breathing to break the silence, the full weight of the situation hit him like an anchor.

“This is stupid, stupid, *stupid*...” he cursed softly to himself.

Hatch stood in the hold, shaking his head in disbelief. He could have been a baker. His father was a baker. An honorable profession, feeding people! So why did he keep signing himself up for this craziness?

He looked carefully at the growing behemoth in front of him, assessing the job at hand. No doubt about it, he’d have to get close. Too close.

Casting a nervous eye on the beast, he unrolled his tool bag on a barrel. He pulled out a sharp hatchet and cautiously approached the bulkhead.

“Alright, there now,” he advanced, ignoring the paralysis of his wits. “I need to make just a wee bit of noise here.” The kraken seemed to be eyeing him, but he wasn’t quite sure, “... and I’d be very grateful if you could please stay calm....”

The kraken’s filmy red eyes blinked. Both ways.



IT TOOK HATCH a full hour of working through white knuckles and eggshells to tear down the bulkhead wall, keeping tense watch on the beast the whole time. The kraken had been relatively sedate, but now its bulk nearly filled the hold. Its rubbery flesh grew to press against

the inner walls, the wood creaking with every breath.

The bulkhead wall had been pine and broke apart without much difficulty. However, the two beams flanking the sides of the doorway were solid oak, six inches thick and banded in iron at top and bottom. He needed to bring them down as quickly as possible. Hatch went over to his tool bag and unstrapped the heavy, two-handed iron mallet. One perfectly placed blow on each beam would do it.

He glanced at the beast. Its eyes were hazily open, staring straight through him. Did the thing ever really sleep?

Hatch carefully stepped through its writhing tentacles to the first beam and braced his feet. He took a deep breath, raised the mallet, and...

“Captain says hurry up!”

The carpenter almost leapt from his boots. Standing right behind him was Runt.

“*Gods!*” Hatch exclaimed through clenched teeth, “Do *not* sneak up on me like that.”

“It’s my way,” Runt said, pulling back the hood on his thick woolen cloak. Up close, Hatch now recognized its detail. A northern cloak, triple layered, belted for harsh winters. He’d once seen them on an expedition to the Barrier Peaks. Unfortunate trip, that.

“You want this job done right now, let me use your cloak.”

Runt raised an eyebrow at him.

“To muffle the sound as best we can,” Hatch explained. “I have two big swings left. And if the spell’s wearing off, I need to do it without rousing the beast. Or else I’ll be just the *first* man eaten on this boat.”

The thief looked warily at the growing creature and nodded, removing his cloak and wrapping it around the first oaken beam.

“Now hold it in place,” the carpenter instructed. “Steady lad, here we go....”

He cocked back the mallet and steeled himself to a count.

“One... two... *three!*”

On the count, Hatch swung hard. The beam broke with a loud snap and its upper post tore loose from the bracket and sagged. Their eyes immediately went to the kraken.

The kraken twitched with a start. A tentacle tip slapped against their boots.

“Hammer *quieter*,” Runt whispered, recovering his cloak. With a scowl, he wrapped it around the other beam. One down, one to go.

The carpenter shifted position and readied himself. The two exchanged nods. Hatch swung again, hitting the beam with full force. The creature unfurled a coil of tentacles with a deep roar, as if lashing out from a dream, knocking them to the floor. The creature’s width expanded further, leaving them precious little workspace and a narrow path back to the stairs.

Then the beast seemed to subside again, growing quiet once more as the pair staggered to their feet. They turned back to the beam. To their dismay, a large crack ran three feet down the beam, yet it still held.

“You botched it,” muttered Runt.

Their position shifted as the kraken seemed to be expanding any direction it could. Hatch was all too aware of the stakes. Without room afforded by a clear path, the beast could turn upward, through the deck, or just as likely down to splinter the very keel of the ship.

“One more swing,” Hatch pleaded. “Then we’re getting out of here.”

Runt eyed raw disgust at him but still adjusted his cloak, doubling up its thickness to a precise spot. One more hit would do it, Hatch was sure. It would have to.

The carpenter repositioned himself, hands shaking as he held the mallet aloft. The kraken let out a shuddering breath. Runt squinted his eyes, waiting for impact.

Hatch swung with all his strength.

The beam shattered and wooden splinters bounced off the stairs. The weight of the mallet pulled Hatch off balance, and he fell in a heap to the boards beneath him.

In response, the kraken twitched and quivered for what seemed like an eternity. The carpenter's heart nearly froze in his chest.

Then, mercifully, the creature fell quiet.

Runt smiled with relief. "That wasn't so—"

A bolt of lightning erupted from the kraken, catching Runt full in the chest and incinerating him to a cloud of blackened ash.

The accompanying thunderclap shook the vessel. A stench of ozone and charred flesh assaulted Hatch's lungs as he scrambled to the stairs coughing violently, eyes wide with horror.

Velora and the half-orc came running down.

"What was that?" demanded Velora.

"Your *pet*..." Hatch gasped, fighting for breath and nearly retching through quakes of panic, "...SHOOTS LIGHTNING BOLTS!"

The captain regarded the carpenter's ash-caked clothes, and beyond him the smoking black scorch mark on the floor.

"Is that...?"

"...*what's left of your thief!*" he stomped, shaking Runt's remains out of his hair and pushing past the group to the top of the stairs. "I'm done! Keep your money! Keep your death squid! I'll swim home and take my chances with the sharks before—"

"You'll get behind me and let the experts handle it," Resnik declared, descending past him with a large, hide-bound book in hand. "The spell has been fully expended and now may be reset. I shall shrink it again, and hold 'til we make the warehouse."

Hatch looked to the crew, exasperated. "Using the spell that failed before?"

“It *didn't* fail,” Resnik shot back. “And this is magic, not woodworking, henchman!”

“Stop calling me *henchman*!” shouted Hatch. “I’ve a damned name! It’s—”

“Shut up and let ’em cast the spell,” growled the half-orc.

Three tentacles shot out from the beneath the creature and bashed against the ceiling, dislodging wood from the upper deck as the party ducked to avoid debris.

“It’s not just gotten bigger, it’s gotten *angrier*,” Hatch insisted.

“Magnificent, truly,” Resnik observed. He flipped through the stolen tome to the selected page, and read aloud from the book in a low rhythmic chant. While he spoke the words his right hand worked rapidly, tracing sigils in the air. A stream of dusty, ruby red light flowed from Resnik’s dancing hand to the kraken, slowly entwining the huge creature. A gentle hum began to fill the hold.

Velora and the half-orc watched Resnik work from the stairs. Hatch took a careful step back as the hum increased. He’d once seen a wizard turn himself inside out when a spell backfired.

Resnik’s smile slowly faded and his brow furrowed in concentration. His hand tugged against some unseen force. The ribbons of light flared brightly and then exploded outward in a shockwave of light, staggering all four of them.

The creature roared angrily and began flaying several tentacles against the hull. Hatch heard oak fracturing.

“It’s growing *more!*” barked the half orc. Hatch had to agree. The bulk of the creature was burgeoning at an alarming rate, fast enough to see it.

“What happened?” asked Velora, retreating a step back up.

“I... I’m not sure,” stammered Resnik. “The spell energy seems to have—”

“Topside!” Velora commanded. “*Now!*”

The creature bellowed an immense roar as the rest of the group fled up the stairs. The half-orc unbuckled the axe at his belt and jumped back as one of the slimy tentacles lashed up at him.

“Grevik!” Velora shouted up, “Full sail!”

“We’re *at* full sail!” the gnome shouted back.

Velora began barking out orders. Crew scrambled across the deck in response. Hatch began grabbing as much rope as he could get his hands on, eyes fixed on the ship’s single small craft, little more than a rowboat, fixed to the stern. It was covered by an oiled tarp and tied down securely. Hatch drew his trusty carpenter’s knife from his belt and started towards it. He called back to Velora.

“Captain!” Hatch shouted through the mayhem, “I can rig up floatables! We need to abandon—”

“Shut up, carpenter!” Velora turned to Resnik. “You! Figure it out!”

Resnik frantically paged through the book, reading out as he went. “No, no, that won’t work, no....”

Beams cracked and broke as the creature’s tail burst upward, barely missing Hatch and caving in a section of the deck, swallowing the rowboat whole. The carpenter spat out a curse.

A geyser of seawater blasted between two slats of wood, knocking the gnome from the tiller. A second and third breach in the hull began filling the hold with water as the creature inhaled it deeply. Multiple cracks were heard from all over as tentacles emerged from the hold. The crew, shouting and panicking, stumbled to get out of reach of the writhing things. Hatch ran to intercept two rolling barrels and began lashing them together.

“Got it!” yelled Resnik, triumphantly pointing to the top of a page. “*Mass aquatic transposition!*”

“What?” Velora shouted, beating back a tentacle.

“Specifically for *this* kraken, yes!” said Resnik, his eyes quickly

scanning the page. He finished excitedly, nodding. “I can send the beast straight to the warehouse. I’ve always wanted to try a teleport!”

“*Try?*” Hatch shot up from his barrels. “*Teleport* is not something you “*try!*” It’s market day in Saltmarsh! You miss, you drop this monster into the middle of a crowd!”

A scream drew their attention. One of the tentacles was wrapped tightly around a crew member. Others stabbed at the tentacle, trying to free him.

“No choice!” yelled the half-orc, who was barely holding two tentacles down.

Resnik sidestepped a tentacle and glared at the carpenter. “How *dare* you....”

“Hundreds could die!” Hatch yelled back.

“We’re not abandoning the prize,” snapped Velora. She pointed at Resnik. “Cast it!”

“Alright, then stop the ship!” called out Resnik. “Tricky enough spell as it is, harder to do it from a moving platform.”

“Helm, come to! Full stop!” bellowed Velora. “Bring in the sail! Drop anchor!”

A chorus of “ayes” sounded as crew in the rigging began hauling on canvas. The gnome furiously yanked the tiller back and forth to create drag. Hatch could feel the ship lurch, slowing already.

Amid the chaos, the mage blocked out all distractions, steeled his focus and began casting the spell straight from the book.

The captain charged forward with a net and began grappling one of the tentacles. Hatch began throwing barrels, sections of bulkhead, anything that could possibly float overboard. He could hear the mage’s chanting reach a crescendo of excitement.

Suddenly, a muffled boom sounded from below.

“I did it!” Resnik shouted, victorious.

The ship jolted upwards as a tremendous weight was removed. Hatch stumbled from the jarring movement and fell flat on his back as the ship bobbed like a cork, all forward momentum halted. He'd never felt a ship do that before.

Across the deck, a ragtag cheer from the group erupted, a mass exhalation of joy and relief.

"Is it...?" Velora asked.

"Safely in the warehouse pit," Resnik smiled.

Velora nodded and turned to the half-orc. "Grab the carpenter to start patching the holes in this bucket. Then we get back underway." The brute began walking over to Hatch, who was groaning from the deck boards.

"Ugh, right on my sore spot," Hatch mumbled. He could overhear the crew converging around Resnik, slapping him on the back in congratulations.

"I knew it," the young mage confirmed. "A book like this, and a mind agile to knowledge. That's what makes the difference. Now let's all get rich!"

Another cheer sounded from the group as the half-orc stood over the carpenter.

"Get up an' do your job," the brute said.

Hatch nodded. He tensed his muscles to bring himself upright, but first he noticed something.

Lying on his back, a flash of shadow crossed his eyes. Not from the half-orc, but something else. He sat up, craned his neck to the sky, and then he saw it.

A dark shape appeared high in the atmosphere.

Despite its great height, Hatch immediately recognized the flailing tentacles and fish-like tail. The man had a sore back, but very sharp eyes. The kraken was at least a mile above them. But *directly* above them, falling fast.

“There!” Hatch shouted, pointing frantically. “Up, up, *up*!”

The mage looked skyward and clenched his jaw, as others also saw it. “Ah. So *that’s* how it shall be...”

Hatch jumped to his feet and waved his arms at the crew. “Abandon ship! What’re you all waiting for?”

“We have seconds, Resnik,” Velora said, “*Do* something!”

“You’re out of time!” Hatch shouted.

The half-orc backhanded him, knocking him to the rail. One thing was for sure, Hatch thought as he coughed out a bloody tooth. This party was committed.

“Time to throw away the crutches,” Resnik said, setting the tome aside as the shape of the creature grew more visible. “I *need* no book. Not anymore. Just belief...”

A glow erupted from the mage’s hands.

“I’ve prepared for this moment all my life,” stated Resnik with great confidence, even serenity. He raised his arms to the rapidly falling silhouette.

Hatch urgently looked over the railing to the waters below him. None of the jetsam he had thrown overboard was within reach. But, circling around and unmistakable, was a new threat. One fin, a second... and then a third.

The sea was full of sharks. Because of course it was.

Crew gathered around Resnik as the glow from his hands increased to a bright red, defiant and true.

“You...” he spoke directly to the falling kraken above, “*will* bend to me!”

The creature grew bigger and bigger as the crew tensed up, transfixed by the sight, almost hypnotized.

Hatch realized he still had his knife in hand. Not much use, really, but

he held it tightly. And just below him, the predators of the deep. He hesitated for an instant. Should he remain and trust his crew?

“You are cast away! BEGONE!” Resnik shouted at the top of his lungs. The ship was now covered in shadow.

“Nope....” Hatch vaulted over the side of the ship, plunging clumsily into the water, straight into the sharks.

A moment later the kraken hit.

Like a meteor, the beast obliterated the front half of the vessel in an explosion of splintered wood, salty spray and black blood. The rest of the ship bucked violently and was upended. The main mast twisted and snapped in a tangle of canvas and rope.

Hatch swam upwards and surfaced for a breath. The sharks surrounding him had scattered on reflex. He caught a brief glimpse of the ship’s aft sinking before a tremendous swell engulfed him and drove him into the depths. Violent, swirling currents sent him tumbling underwater, until he wasn’t sure which way was up. His arms and legs shot out, desperately trying to steady himself. With every bit of strength he had left, he kicked his legs and swam back to the light.

He surfaced again, choking out curses as soon as he had air. Around him, missiles of debris were raining from the sky, pocking the waves with white splashes. What was left of the wreckage sank straight down into the churning brine.

There were no screams.

Ship debris and bloody lumps of kraken floated on the waves as far as he could see. Instinctively, he began looking around for anything big enough to grab onto.

That’s when he noticed a large fin cutting through the water toward him. The shark closed half the distance in a heartbeat. Hatch knew what was in store. He gripped his knife, the shark’s jaws were nearly upon him, and then....



NO ONE MOVES, not a one of us. The barkeep speaks first: “An’ you swam with that shark in tow for what, five miles?”

Carpenter nods to his shark friend. “He did most of the swimming.”

Now we’re all talking at once. So *that’s* what we heard, not an hour ago. The big boom, the rumbling offshore, the birds all squawking and flying around, people yelling from the docks. Maybe it was two or three hours. As I said, we’ve been drinking.

The man motions to quiet us down.

“If there’s one thing I’ve learned from this,” he announces, “It’s that you always, *always*—”

Door’s kicked upon yet again, flooding the whole room with daylight. In walks an armored dwarf with an axe and an elf wearing wizard robes. Looks like they’re in a hurry.

“Right then! Lowlifes, we need a carpenter!” the dwarf yells. “A hundred gold in advance, we sail immediately, and no questions asked!”

One by one, every head turns to the only man in the room who fits that description. He sighs and looks up to the barkeep. “Keep the shark for a pie. Not too much butter.”

Barkeep’s speechless, for once.

“Trust me on this,” the carpenter says, the barest hint of a smile on his face. “My father was a baker.”

Then our man pulls his knife out of the shark’s head as a fountain of dark blood shoots upward. He slowly stands and nods to the dwarf and the wizard. They turn to leave the tavern. He steals a quick moment to stretch out sore muscles, arching his back with a groan.

And then this “Hatch” swab, this humble carpenter who’s seen a few scars, who no sea-ravaging beast could ever kill, half-limps past the lot of us to follow his new crew out to the docks—stopping just long enough at the doorway to turn back to the tavern and say one last thing.

“Well,” he goes with a shrug, “I never *did* get paid....”

And that’s the last any of us ever saw him. I suppose there’s a broader lesson here, other than always getting your coin in advance. Has to be a lesson to this brand of tale, right? At least that’s what I’ve been told.

But now I’m thinking hard on it, and whatever it is just escapes me.

Who can figure out a henchman?

Granted, creative liberties may have been taken with the spellbook Resnik pilfered and its new custom spells. But we’ve gone ahead and recreated these spells, if you plan to transport any krakens in your own games!

[Download the SPELLS PDF](#)

As an added bonus, we’ve also included stats for the juvenile kraken, as they appear in *Ghosts of Saltmarsh*.

[Download the Kraken PDF](#)

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CODEx OF THE DEPTHS (TOME OF KRAKEN LORE)

This ancient grimoire is bound in sharkskin leather, with tarnished brass adorning its corners, spine, and clasps. Within, the book's stained yellow pages hold diagrams and sketches of kraken anatomy, detailed notes on that creature's ecology and life cycle, and a disquisition on the known history of krakens. It also contains instructions on raising a kraken in captivity, along with customized spells to aid the would-be kraken handler.

Among the many custom spells within the *Codex of the Depths* are the following, featured in the story "The Henchman."

DIMINISHING REPOSE

4th-level transmutation

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 120 feet

Components: V, S, M (a pinch of powdered pearl worth at least 50 gp)

Duration: 12 hours

This spell causes one Large or larger creature to be reduced in size and pacified for easier handling. The target can attempt a Wisdom saving throw to negate the spell's effect. On a failed save, the target's size is reduced to one-quarter in all dimensions, and its weight is reduced to one-sixteenth of normal. Equipment worn or held by the creature is likewise reduced in size and weight. Any item dropped by the target creature returns to normal size at once.

While so reduced, a creature has its mind and instincts transformed, imposing disadvantage on Strength saving throws, suppressing strong emotions, and putting the creature into a state of complete calm. The creature does not attack or engage in combat unless it is attacked or otherwise provoked, which ends the spell.

If powdered ruby worth at least 200 gp is used as the spell's material component instead of powdered pearl, the duration is doubled and the saving throw is made with disadvantage.

MASS AQUATIC TRANSPPOSITION

7th-level conjuration

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 120 feet

Components: V, S

Duration: Instantaneous

This spell causes an aquatic creature and a volume of water surrounding it to be instantly teleported to a destination you select. The creature and the volume of water can be no larger than a 40-foot cube. The destination you choose must be known to you, and it must be within 20 miles of you. Your familiarity with the destination determines the success of the transposition. The DM rolls d100 and consults the table.

Familiarity	Mishap	Body of Water	Off Target	On Target
Permanent circle	—	—	—	01–100
Associated object	—	—	—	01–100
Very familiar	01–03	04–10	11–25	26–100
Seen casually	01–10	11–25	26–50	51–100
Viewed once	01–25	26–50	51–75	76–100
Description	01–50	51–75	76–90	91–100
False destination	01–100	—	—	—

Familiarity. "Permanent circle" means a permanent teleportation circle whose sigil sequence you know. "Associated object" means that you possess an object taken from the desired destination within the last six months, such as a piece of wood taken from a pier, a pebble taken from a cave, or a brick from a harbor wall.

"Very familiar" is a place you have been very often, a place you have carefully studied, or a place you can see when you cast the spell. "Seen casually" is some place you have seen more than once but with which you aren't very familiar. "Viewed once" is a place you have seen once, possibly using magic. "Description" is a place whose location and appearance you know through someone else's description, perhaps from a map.

"False destination" is a place that doesn't exist.

On Target. The creature and the water surrounding it appear where you want them to.

Off Target. The creature and the volume of water around it appear a random distance away from the destination in a random direction. Distance off target is $1d10 \times 1d10$ percent of the distance that was to be traveled. For example, if you tried to transpose a creature 20 miles, landed off target, and rolled a 5 and 3 on the two d10s, then the creature would be off target by 15 percent, or 3 miles. The DM determines the direction off target randomly by rolling a d8 and designating 1 as north, 2 as northeast, 3 as east, and so on around the points of the compass.

Body of Water. The creature ends up in a random location in the nearest natural body of water, such as a pond, river, lake, or sea.

Mishap. The spell's magic is badly corrupted. There is a 20 percent chance that the creature materializes at a random height directly above its point of origin. Otherwise, it materializes at a random distance and direction from the starting point, at the DM's discretion.

JUVENILE KRAKEN

Huge monstrosity (titan), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 207 (18d12 + 90)

Speed 20 ft., swim 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	11 (+0)	20 (+5)	19 (+4)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Str +12, Dex +5, Con +10, Int +9, Wis +7

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities lightning

Condition Immunities frightened, paralyzed

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages understands Abyssal, Celestial, Infernal, and Primordial but can't speak; telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 14 (11,500 XP)

Amphibious. The kraken can breathe air and water.

Freedom of Movement. The kraken ignores difficult terrain, and magical effects can't reduce its speed or cause it to be restrained. It can spend 5 feet of movement to escape from nonmagical restraints or being grappled.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The kraken makes two tentacle attacks, each of which it can replace with a use of Fling.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d8 + 7) piercing damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature grappled by the kraken, that creature is swallowed and the grapple ends. While swallowed, the creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the kraken, and it takes 21 (6d6) acid damage at the start of each of the kraken's turns. One Medium or two smaller creatures can be swallowed at the same time.

If the kraken takes 35 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, the kraken must succeed on a DC 23 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate all

swallowed creatures, which fall prone in spaces within 10 feet of the kraken. If the kraken dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 10 feet of movement, exiting prone.

Tentacle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (3d6 + 7) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 20). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained. The kraken has ten tentacles, each of which can grapple one target.

Fling. One Medium or smaller object held or creature grappled by the kraken is thrown up to 40 feet in a random direction and knocked prone. If a thrown target strikes a solid surface, the target takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet it was thrown. If the target is thrown at another creature, that creature must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take the same damage and be knocked prone.

Lightning Strike. The kraken magically create a bolt of lightning, which can strike a target the kraken can see within 90 feet of it. The target must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

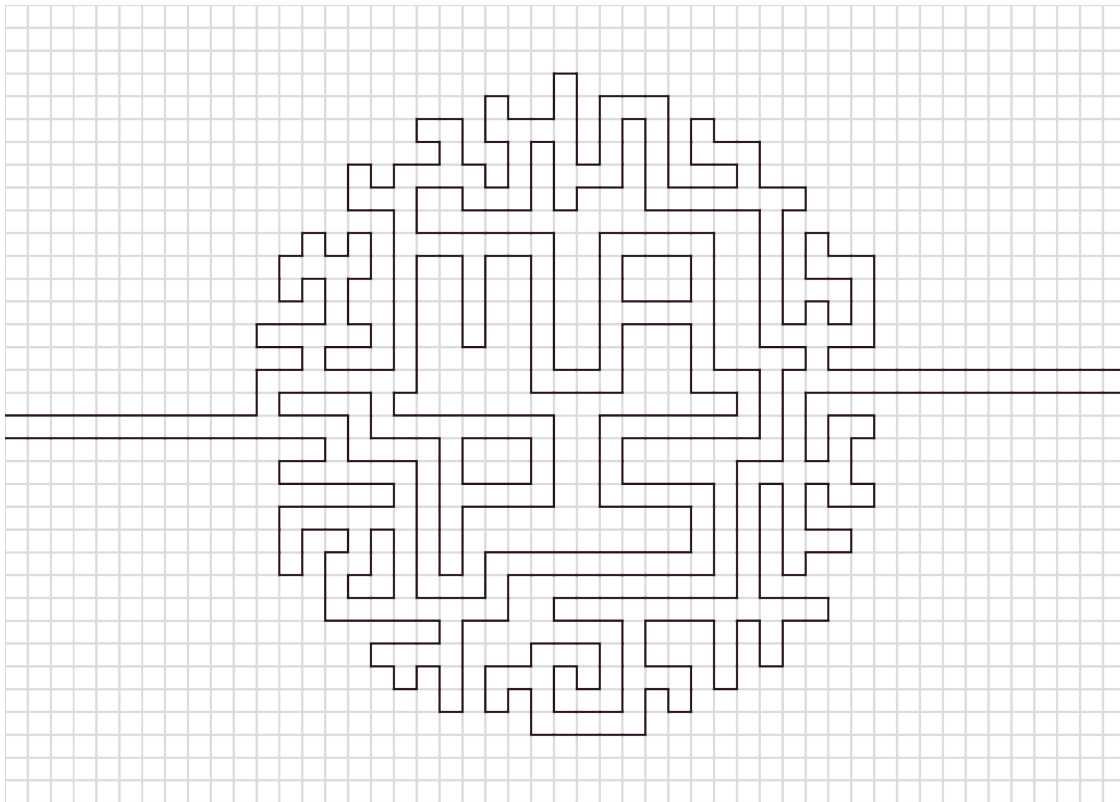
The kraken can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The kraken regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Tentacle Attack (Costs 2 Actions). The kraken makes one tentacle attack.

Fling. The kraken uses Fling.

Ink Cloud (Costs 3 Actions). While underwater, the kraken expels an ink cloud in a 40-foot radius. The cloud spreads around corners, and that area is heavily obscured to creatures other than the kraken. Each creature other than the kraken that ends its turn there must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, taking 11 (2d10) poison damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one. A strong current disperses the cloud, which otherwise disappears at the end of the kraken's next turn.

Maps of the Month: Ghosts of Saltmarsh Maps and Art



*WARNING: MAY INCLUDE SPOILERS FOR WATERDEEP:
GHOSTS OF SALTMARSH*

GHOSTS OF SALTMARSH: MAPS

Ghosts of Saltmarsh collects seven adventures, each famous for their unique challenges, deadly threats, and for embracing both the danger and wonder of the high seas. Some of these adventures initially charted their courses in the earliest days of D&D's history, while others set sail in more recent years. In each case, these tales of plunder and peril have been updated for the current edition of the game, revealing deadly shores for brave crews to explore anew.

Now that *Ghosts of Saltmarsh* has hit shelves, we hope the following selection of maps—tagged and untagged—will prove helpful in

running these adventures, or for use in other aquatic locations in your campaigns. And be sure to check back in future issues for further maps from this book.

Saltmarsh

First, let's tour the nondescript fishing village tucked away on the southern coast of the Kingdom of Keoland. Saltmarsh is a bastion of civilization in the midst of an untamed region. While it might be encrusted in sea salt and reek of rotting fish guts, there is gold aplenty in the coffers of its citizens.

For more than a century, the ships of Saltmarsh have worked the rich fishing grounds along the coast. Trade ships from near and far have been using the docks to unload their goods, and lately more ships have come to call as the dwarven mining operation grows. Smuggling has also long been a profitable business here.

A map of the village:



(Select to view)

(high res image [here](#))



(Select to view)

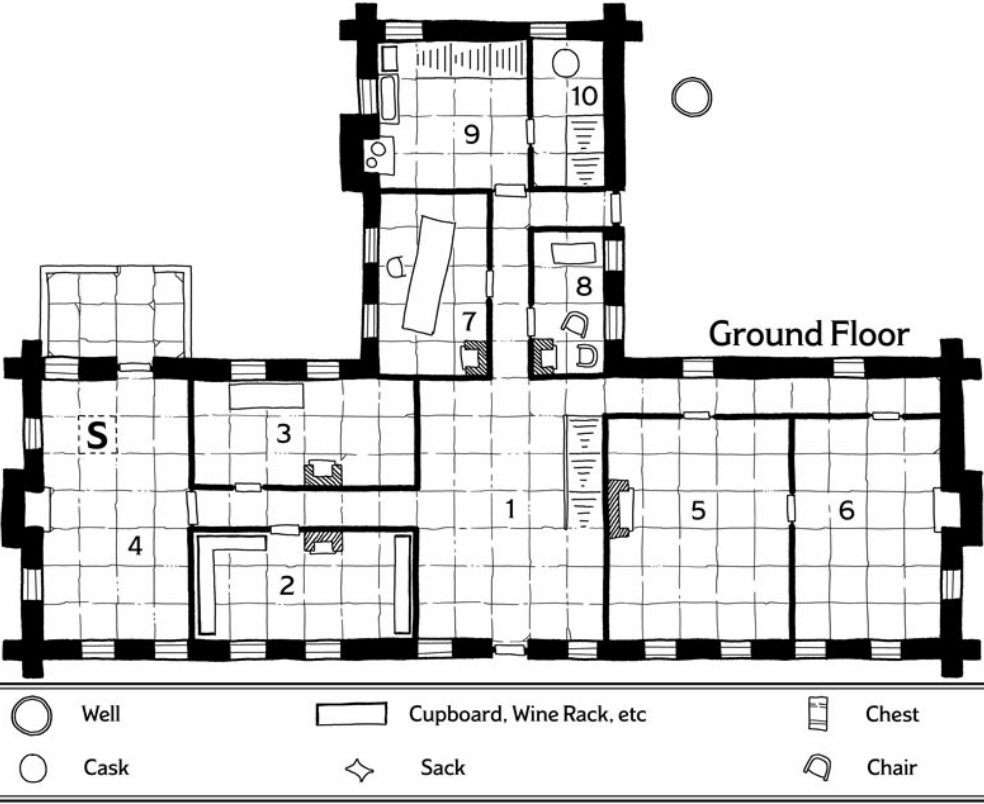
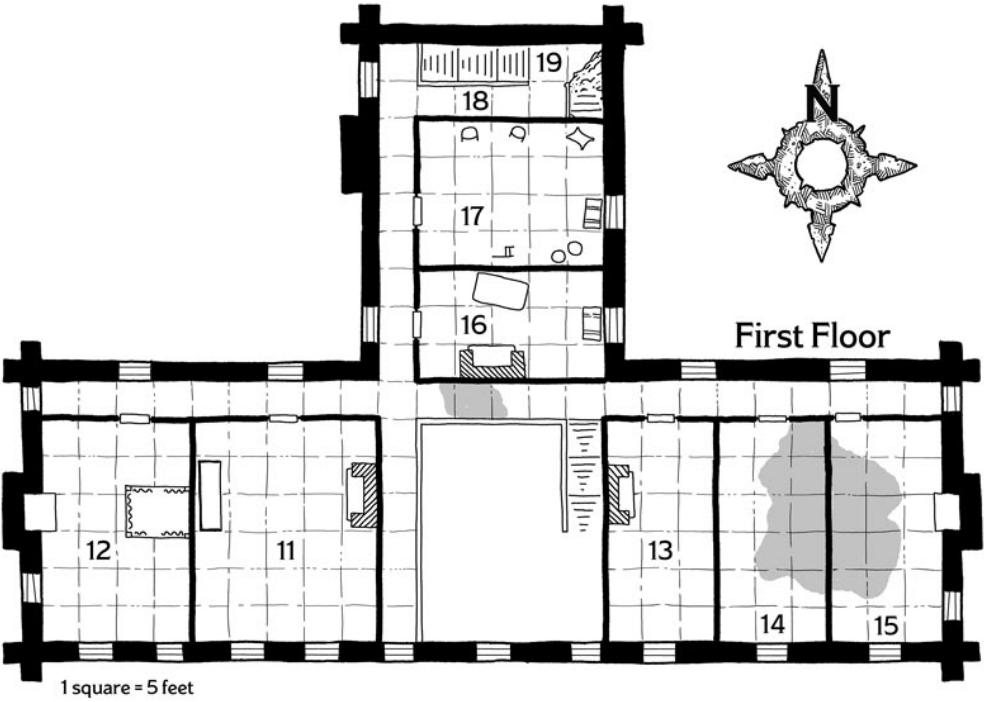
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Sinister Secret of Saltmarsh

Next let's travel four miles east of Saltmarsh, just inland of the old

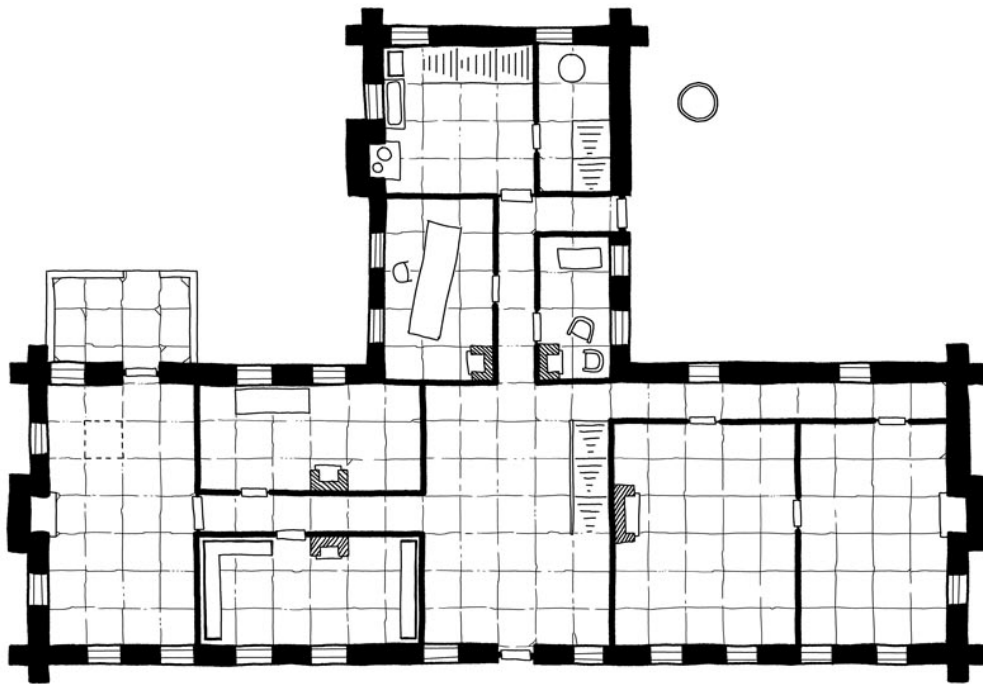
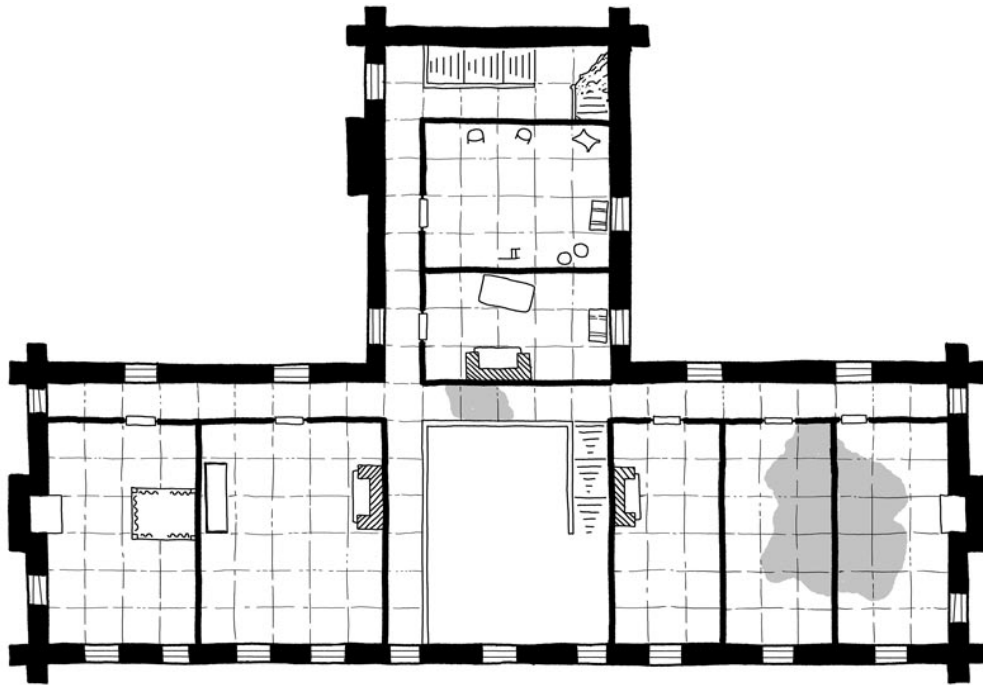
coast road, where stands a haunted house. Until twenty years ago this house had been the residence of an aged alchemist of sinister reputation. Even then locals avoided the house because of its owner's mysterious activities. Now, two decades after the unexplained disappearance of its occupant, the house has taken on an even greater air of evil and mystery—and serves as the location for the book's first adventure, *The Sinister Secret of Saltmarsh*.

A map of the house's ground/first floors:



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The Final Enemy

Let's jump ahead to a later adventure in the series. *The Final Enemy*, as originally written, challenged players to plan and carry out reconnaissance on a dangerous sahuagin lair. In *Ghosts of Saltmarsh*, the designers further added an epic final battle where the characters have a chance to lead a decisive assault on the sahuagin fortress.

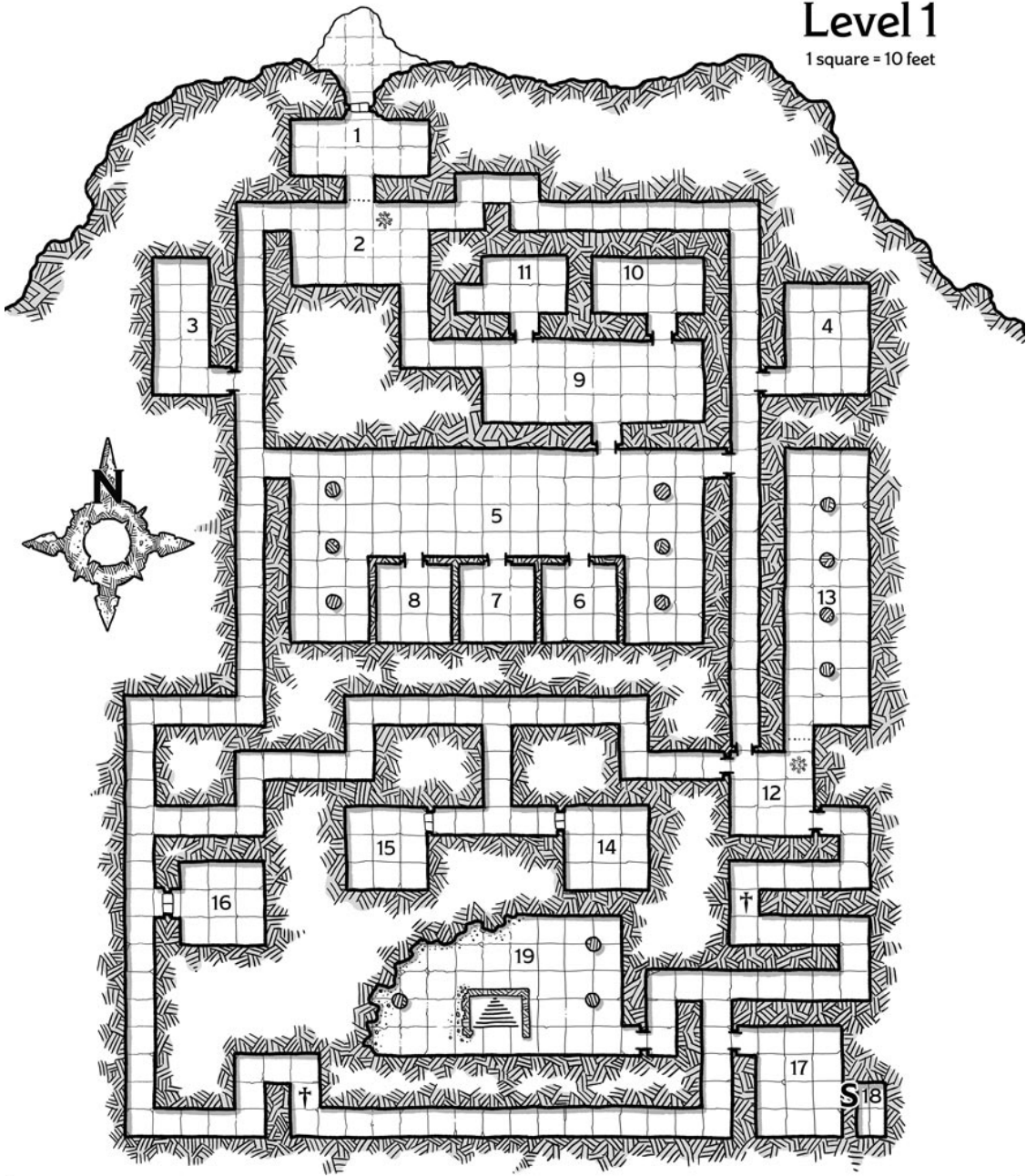
The fortress and former home to the lizardfolk is a rocky island located at the mouth of the Javan River. When the lizardfolk laired there, the island was almost entirely above sea level. Thadrah, the sahuagin high priestess of Sekolah, worked ritual magic that sank the island by lowering the seabed.








A map of the lair's first level:

Sahuagin Lair

Level 1

1 square = 10 feet



 Double Door	 Secret Door	 Gate Opening Mechanism	 Stairs Down
 Archway	 Barred Gate	 Points beyond which sounds of working in room 19 may be heard	

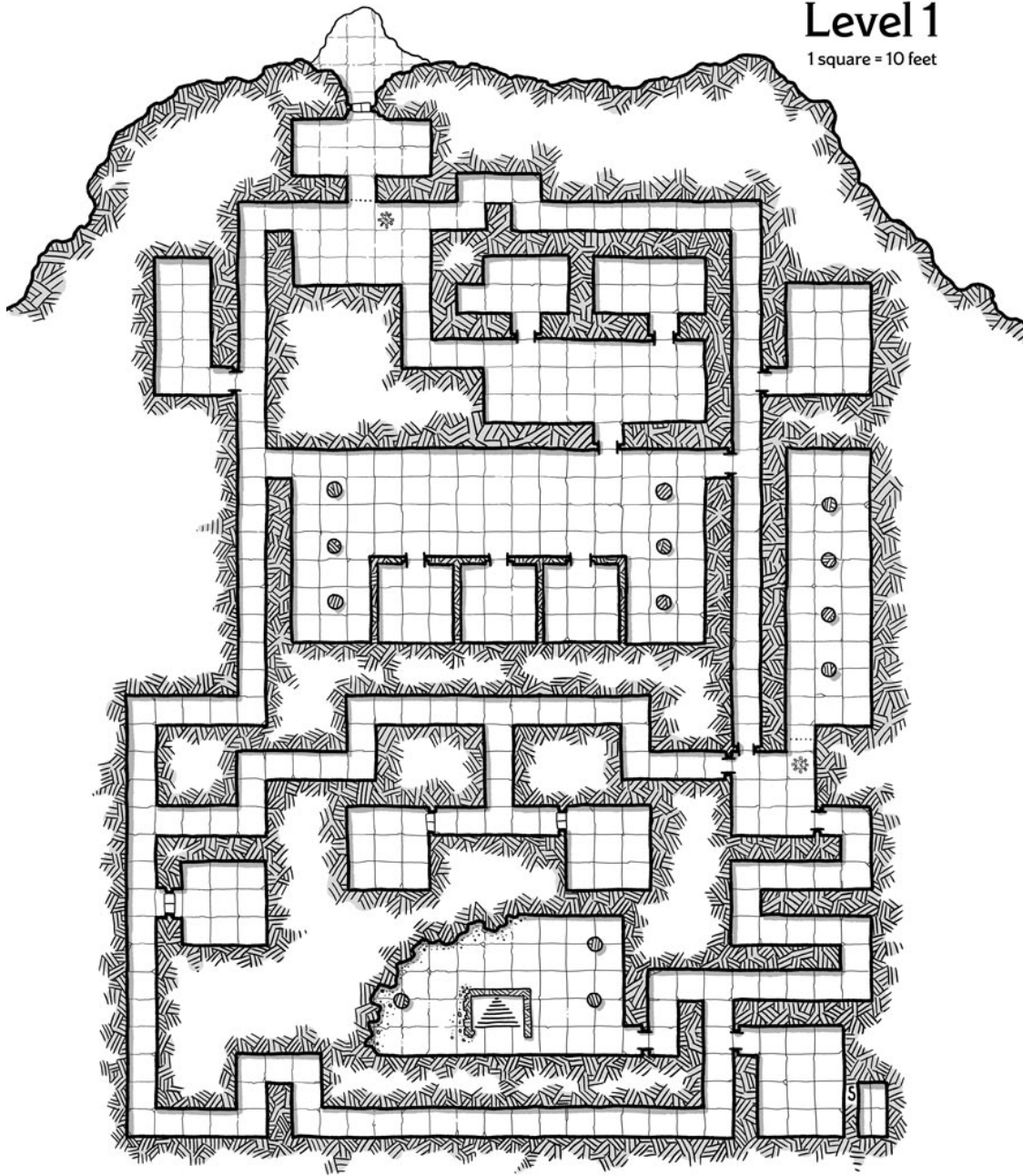
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Sahuagin Lair

Level 1

1 square = 10 feet



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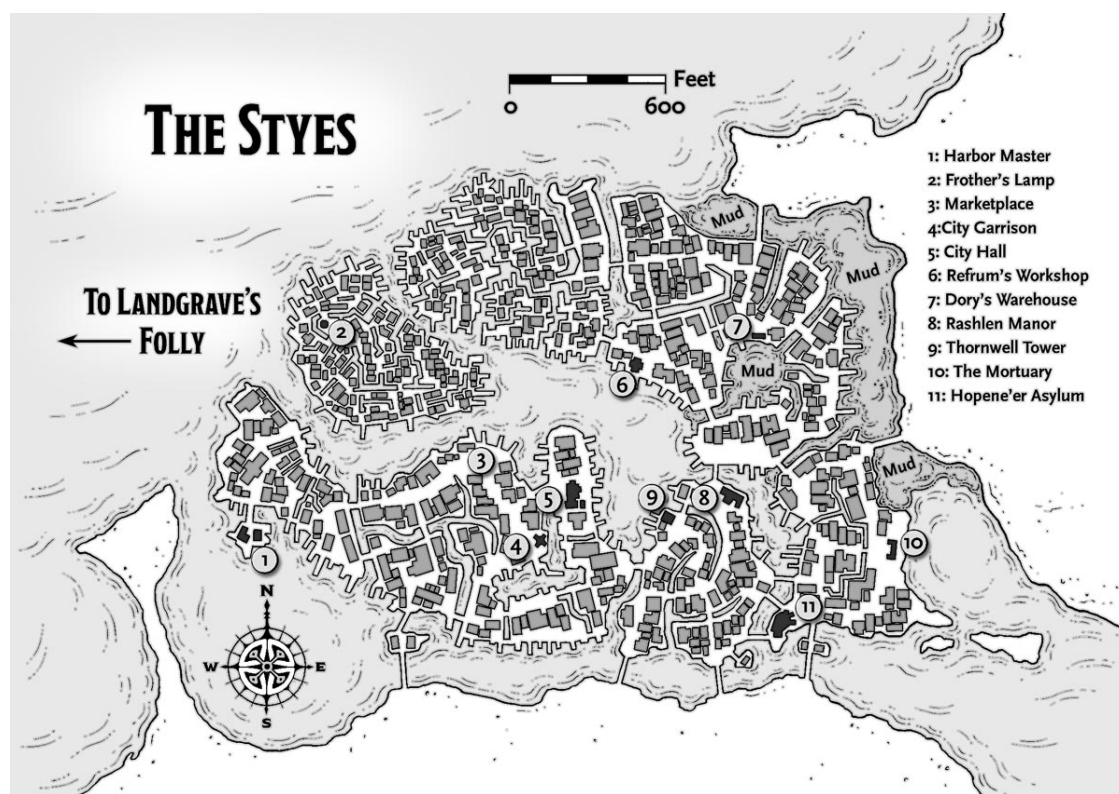
The Styes

Finally, here's an additional map from one of the book's adventures

outside of the U-series, showing a decaying port fallen on hard times and slowly being reclaimed by the sea. In the Styes, originally created for *Dungeon* magazine #121, mysterious murders shake the downtrodden folk of the area.

Even after the so-called Lantern Ghost killer is caught and executed, some in the district believe that the true killer is still out there. It's left to the adventurers to follow the clues that the local militia ignores, exposing corruption, the clandestine activities of a dark cult... and the alien presence whose evil lurks beneath it all.

A map of the port:



(Select to view)

(high res image [here](#))



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GHOSTS OF SALTMARSH: ART

In addition to the selection of maps, we're also pleased to showcase the following gallery of art from *Ghosts of Saltmarsh*! As described in their art orders:

Sea Cave

Three adventurers stand silhouetted at the mouth of a sea cave, the ocean and the night sky visible beyond. A couple of rowboats are beached on the shore near the mouth of the cave. Barrels, ropes, and rigging are strewn about. Art by Even Amundsen.



(Select to view)

(high res version [here](#))

Boarding the Hulk

Four characters have just boarded, or are about to board, a drifting ship without a crew. It was once a glorious three-masted sailing ship with raised forecastle and sterncastle, but the sails and rigging were lost in a storm. The ship rides low in the water because of flooding and lists slightly. It's a ragged, sorry finish to a once magnificent vessel. Art by Julian Kok.



(Select to view)

(high res version [here](#))

Giant Octopus

Below decks on a wooden ship, two heroes are fleeing the writhing arms of a giant octopus attacking them through breaches smashed in

the hull. Water fills the ship through these breaches. Art by Sam Keiser.



(Select to view)

(high res version [here](#))

Altar of Sekolah

A stone altar whose panels contain a dozen shark eyes of various sizes stands in the center of this ceremonial room. A sahuagin priestess holds a writhing sahuagin tadpole in one hand and a cruel dagger in another. Swimming over the altar is a massive two-headed white shark whose fins are decorated with bands, shells, and precious stones. Art by Mark Behm.



(Select to view)

(high res version [here](#))

Peryton

Tremendous peryton dominates the sky above three of the adventurers preparing for battle. The peryton's coloration is dark and dire. Below, the adventurers stand on an island's beach, having just arrived. Behind the figures, a fortress is visible, its bell tower prominently seen. Art by Eric Belisle.



(Select to view)

(high res version [here](#))

Locathah

Finally, this awesome critter by Shawn Wood! These resilient and proud fish-folk have endured war, slavery, and mistreatment at the hands of other aquatic creatures. They dwell in submerged tribal communities along seacoasts, and hunt both above and below the water.



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Watch Bart Carroll discuss Saltmarsh art with Kate Irwin & Shawn Wood:

[Watch on Twitch](#)

Cartographers

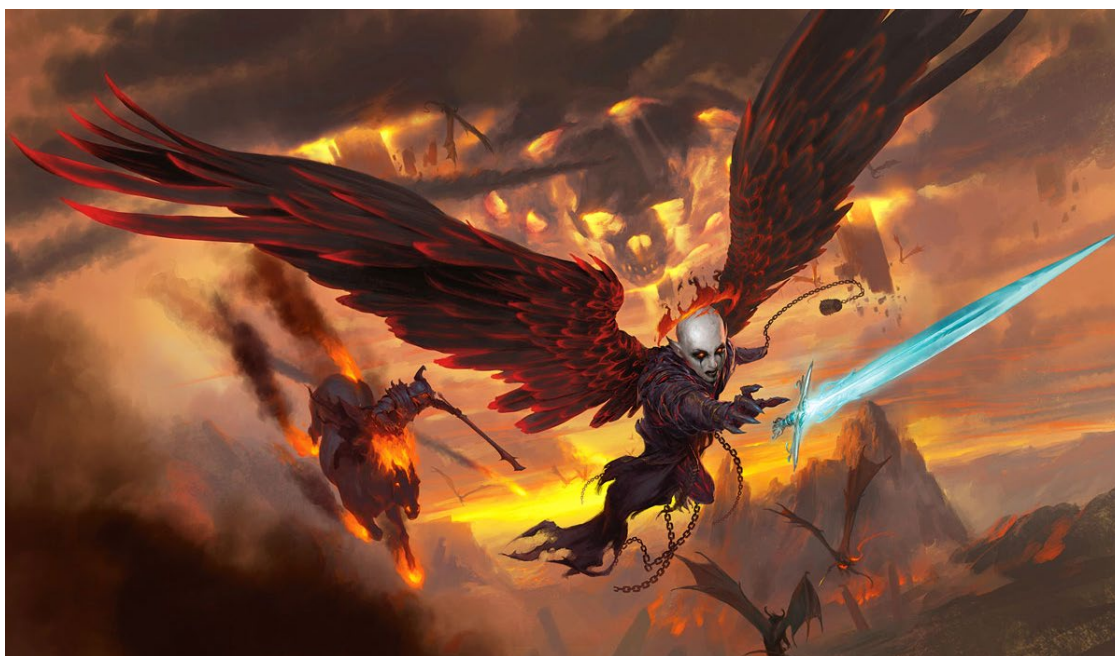
And as always, our appreciation goes out to our amazing cartographers; this issue, these include [Claudio Pozas](#) and [Tim Hartin](#).

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Next Issue: Dragon 27



If you thought the trip to the Nine Hells during *D&D Live 2019: The Descent* was eye opening, you'll want to catch further exclusive details of *Baldur's Gate: Descent Into Avernus* next issue. Adventurers League head honcho Chris Lindsay will also be introducing a specially commissioned adventure and taking us through its twists and turns.



Speaking of head honchos, there's a new boss in town as we honor another major donor from Extra Life 2018. As a thank you for his generosity we're letting Chris Boyce take the helm as a guest editor, putting his personal stamp on Issue 27. He'll be helping us discuss more Character Concepts so you get the best-dressed characters, highlight more women in fantasy art, and uncover efforts to create a common sign language for D&D concepts—because not everything can be explained by simply adding the words “owl” and “bear” together.

There's all this, plus more exclusive previews, must-read fiction, another delve into the imposing *Dragon* archive, all our regulars such as the best video and audio highlights, and much, *much* more!

(Contents subject to change)



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A big thank you to the extended D&D family for
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